

Seasonable Counsel :
OR,
A D V I C E
T O
Sufferers.

BY
JOHN BUNYAN.

L O N D O N,

Printed for Benjamin Alsop, at
the Angel and Bible in the
Poultry. MDC LXXXIV.

TO THE
CHRISTIAN
READER.

Beloved, I thought it
convenient, since many
at this day are exposed
to sufferings, to give
my advice touching
that to thee. Namely, that thou
wouldest take heed to thy self,
and keep thy Soul diligently, and
not suffer thy self to be entan-
gled in those snares that God hath
suffered to be laid in the World
for some. Beware of men, is the
A. 3. counsel

To the Reader,

counsel of Christ, for they will deliver you up. (Mat. 10 17.) Keep thou therefore within the bounds of uprightness and integrity towards both God and man: for that will fortifie, that will preserve thee, if not from, yet under the rage of men, in a comfortable and quiet frame of heart. Wherefore do that, and that only, that will justifie thy innocency, and that will help thee, not with forced Speech, but with good Conscience (when oppressed) to make thy appeals to God, and to the Consciences of all men.

This is the advice that (I thank God) I have taken my self: for I find that there is nothing, next to God and his Grace by Christ, that can stand one in such stead, as will a good and harmless Conscience.

To the Reader.

I hope I can say God has made me a Christian: and a Christian must be a harmless Man, and, to that end, must imbrace nothing but harmless Principles. A Christians business, as a Christian, is to believe in Jesus Christ and in God the Father by him, and to seek the good of all about him, according as his place, state and capacity in this World will admit, not meddling with other mens matters, but ever following that which is good.

A Christian is a Child of the Kingdom of God, and that Kingdom (take it as it begins in Grace, or as it is perfected in Glory,) is not of this World but of that which is to come: and though (men of old as) some may now be afraid of that Kingdom: yet that Kingdom will have no man, neither with its Principles,

A 4 ples,

To the Reader.

ples, nor by it self. To instance somewhat, Faith in Christ; what harm can that do? A life regulated by a moral Law, what hurt is in that? Rejoycing in Spirit for the hope of the life to come, by Christ, what will that harm? Nor is the instituted worship of our Lord of any evil tendency, Christianity teaches us also to do our enemies good, to love them that hate us, and to pray for them that despitefully use us and persecute us, and what evil can be in that. This is the summ of the Christian Religion, (as by the word may be plainly made appear:) wherefore I counsel thee to keep close to these things, and touch with nothing that jostleth therewith.

Nor do thou marvel (thou living thus) if some should be so foolish as to seek thy hurt, and to afflict thee, because thy works
are

To the Reader.

are good. (1 John 3. 12.) For there is need that thou shouldest at sometimes be in manifold temptations, thy good and innocent life notwithstanding. (1 Pet. 1. 6.) For, to omit other things, there are some of the graces of God that are in thee, that as to some of their Acts, cannot shew themselves, nor their excellency, nor their power, nor what they can do: but as thou art in a suffering state. Faith and Patience, in persecution, has that to do, that to shew, and that to perform, that cannot be done, shewed, nor performed any where else but there. There is also a patience of hope; a rejoicing in hope, when we are in tribulation, that is, over and above that which we have when we are at ease and quiet. That also that all graces can endure, and triumph over, shall not be known, but when, and
as

To the Reader.

as we are in a state of affliction. Now these Acts of our Graces are of that worth and esteem with God, also he so much delighteth in them: that occasion thorough his righteous Judgment, must be ministred for them to shew their beauty, and what bravery there is in them.

It is also to be considered that those Acts of our Graces, that cannot be put forth, or shew themselves in their splendor, but when we Christianly suffer; will yield such fruit to those whose Tryals call them to exercise, that will in the day of God, abound to their comfort and tend to their perfection in glory. (1 Pet. 1. 7. 2 Cor. 4. 17.)

Why then should we think that our innocent lives will exempt us from sufferings, or that troubles shall do us such harm? For verily it is for our present and future good that our God doth send them.

To the Reader.

them upon us. I count therefore that such things are necessary for the health of our Souls, as bodily pains and labour are for the Body. People that live high, and in idleness, bring diseases upon the Body: and they that live in all fulness of Gospel-Ordinances, and are not exercised with Tryals, grow gross, are diseased and full of bad humours in their Souls. And though this may to some seem strange: yet our day has given us such an experimental proof of the truth thereof, as has not been known for some ages past.

Alas we have need of those bitter pills, at which we so whinch and shuck: and it will be well if at last we be purged as we should thereby. I am sure we are but little the better as yet, though the Physician has had us so long in hand. Some bad humours may possibly ere long be

To the Reader.

be driven out: but at present the disease is so high, that it makes some professors fear more a Consumption will be made in their purses by these Doses, than they desire to be made better in their Souls thereby. I see that I still have need of these Tryals, and if God will by these, judge me as he judges his Saints, that I may not be condemned with the World, I will cry, Grace, Grace for ever.

The consideration also that we have deserved these things, much silence me as to what may yet happen unto me. I say, to think that we have deserved them of God (though against men we have done nothing) makes me lay my hand upon my mouth, and causes me to hold my tongue. Shall we deserve correction? And be angry because we have it! Or shall it come to save us? and shall we be offended with the hand that brings it.

To the Reader.

it. Our sickness is so great that our enemies take notice of it; let them know too that we also take our Purges patiently. We are willing to pay for those Potions that are given us for the health of our Body, how sick soever they make us: and if God will have us pay too for that which is to better our Souls, why should we grudge thereat? Those that bring us these Medicines have little enough for their pains: for my part, I profess, I would not for a great deal, be bound, for their wages, to do their work. True, Physicians are for the most part chargeable, and the niggards are too loth to part with their Money to them: but when necessity says they must either take Physick, or die: of two evils they desire to chuse the least. Why, affliction is better than sin, and if God sends the one to cleanse us from
the

To the Reader.

the other, let us thank him, and be also content to pay the messenger.

And thou that art so loth to pay for thy sinning, and for the means that puts thee upon that exercise of thy graces, as will be for thy good hereafter: take heed of tempting of God lest he doubleth this Potion unto thee. The Child by eating of raw Fruit stands in need of Physick, but the Child of a childish humour refuseth to take the Potion, what follows but a doubling of the affliction, to wit frowns, chides, and further threatenings and a forcing of the bitter Pills upon him. But let me, to perswade thee to lie down and take thy Potion, tell thee, 'tis of absolute necessity, to wit for thy spiritual and internal health. For,

First, Is it better that thou receive judgment in this World, or that thou stay for it to be condemned.

To the Reader.

demned with the ungodly in the next?

Secondly, Is it better that thou shouldest, as to some acts of thy Graces, be foreign, and a stranger, and consequently that thou shouldest lose that far more exceeding, and eternal weight of glory that is prepared as the reward thereof? or that thou should'st receive it at the hand of God, when the day shall come that every man, shall have praise of him for their doings?

Thirdly, And I say again, since chastisements are a sign of sonship, a token of love: and the contrary a sign of Bastardy, and a token of hatreds (Heb. 12. 6, 7, 8. Hos. 4. 14.) Is it not better that we bear those tokens and marks in our flesh that bespeak us to belong to Christ, than those that declare us to be none of his. For my part, God help me to chuse rather to suffer affliction

To the Reader.

on with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season: and God of his mercy prepare me for his will. I am not for running my self into sufferings: but if Godliness will expose me to them, the Lord God make me more godly still: for I believe there is a World to come.

But Christian Reader, I would not detain thee from a sight of those sheets in thy hand: only let me beg of thee, that thou wilt not be offended either with God, or men, if the cross is laid heavy upon thee. Not with God, for he doth nothing without a cause: nor with men, for they are the hand of God: and will they, nill they; they are the servants of God to thee for good. (Psal. 17. 14. Jer. 24. 5.) Take therefore what comes to thee from God by them, thankfully. If the messenger that brings it is
glad

To the Reader.

glad that 'tis in his power to do thee hurt, and to afflict thee; if he skips for joy at thy calamity: be sorry for him; pity him, and pray to thy Father for him: he is ignorant and understandeth not the judgment of thy God, yea he sheweth by this his behaviour, that though he as Gods ordnance serveth thee by afflicting of thee: yet means he nothing less than to destroy thee: by the which also he prognosticates before thee that he is working out his own damnation by doing of thee good. Lay therefore the woful state of such to heart, and render him that which is good for his evil; and love for his hatred to thee: then shalt thou shew that thou art acted by a Spirit of holiness, and art like thy heavenly Father. And be it so, that thy pity and Prayers can do such an one no good, yet they must light some where:

To the Reader.

where: or return again, as Ships
come laden from the Indies, full
of blessings into thine own bosome.

And besides all this, is there
nothing in dark Providences for
the sake of the sight, and obser-
vation of which, such a day may be
rendred lovely, when 'tis upon us.
Is there nothing of God, of his
Wisdom and Power and goodness
to be seen in Thunder, and Light-
ning, in Hailstones? in Storms,
and darkness and tempests? Why,
then is it said, he hath his way
in the whirlwind and storm.
(Nahum 1. 3.)? And why have
Gods servants of old made such
notes, and observed from them,
such excellent and wonderful
things. There is that of God to be
seen in such a day as cannot be seen
in another. His power in hold-
ing up some, his wrath in leaving
of others; his making of Shrubs

To the Reader.

to stand, and his suffering of Cedars to fall; his infatigating of the Counsels of men, and his making of the Devil to outwit himself; his giving of his presence to his people, and his leaving of his foes in the dark; his discovering the uprightness of the hearts of his sanctified ones, and laying open the Hypocrisie of others, is a working of spiritual Wonders in the day of his wrath, and of the whirlwind and storm. These days! these days are the days that do most aptly give an occasion to Christians, of any, to take the exactest measures and scantlings of our selves. We are apt to overshoot, in days that are calm, and to think our selves far higher, and more strong than we find we be, when the trying day is upon us. The mouth of Gaal and the boasts of Peter were great and high

To the Reader.

high before the Tryal came, but when that came, they found themselves to fall far short of the courage they thought they had. (Judges 9. 38.)

We also, before the temptation comes, think we can walk upon the Sea, but when the winds blow, we feel our selves begin to sink. Hence such a time is rightly said to be a time to try us, or to find out what we are, and is there no good in this? Is it not this that rightly rectifies our judgment about our selves, that makes us to know our selves, that tends to cut off those superfluous spriggs of pride and self-conceitedness, wherewith we are subject to be overcome? Is not such a day, the day that bends us, humbleth us, and that makes us bow before God, for our faults committed in our prosperity? and yet doth it yield no good unto us? we could not live without such turn-
ings

To the Reader.

ings of the hand of God upon us.
We should be overgrown with flesh,
if we had not our seasonable Win-
ters. 'Tis said that in some Coun-
treys Trees will grow, but will bear no
fruit, because there is no Winter
there. The Lord bless all seasons
to his people and help them right-
ly to behave themselves under all
the times that go over them.

Farewel.

I am thine

to serve thee

in the Gospel,

John Bunyan.

To the Reader.

THESE are the first of our new
works, which we have thought
fit to publish, and which we
trust will be of great use to
the world. We have been
very much assisted in this
work by the many good
friends who have been
kind enough to give us
their advice and assistance.
We have also been very
much assisted by the many
good friends who have been
kind enough to give us
their advice and assistance.
We have also been very
much assisted by the many
good friends who have been
kind enough to give us
their advice and assistance.

B
with
Pri
me
in
ted.

Ingenious Reader,

BY reason of the Authors absence, some small faults are escaped, notwithstanding the diligence of the Printer; which thou art desired to mend with thy Pen: And particularly in Page 192. r. 25. for *buffeted* read *butted*. p. 194. l. 13. r, *so I could,*

ADVICE

ADVICE
TO
SUFFERERS.

PETER IV. 19.

Wherefore, let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing as unto a faithful Creator.

THis Epistle was written to Saints in affliction, specially those of the Circumcision, for whom this Peter was an Apostle. And it was written to them to counsel, and comfort them in their affliction.

2 Advice to Sufferers.

affliction. To counsel them as to *the cause*, for which they were in afflictions, and as to the *right* management of themselves, and their cause under their affliction.

To comfort them also both with respect to their present help from God, and also with reference to the reward that (they faithfully continuing to the end) should of God be bestowed upon them: all which we shall have occasion, more distinctly, to handle in this following discourse.

The Text is a conclusion, drawn from the Counsel and comfort which the Apostle had afore given them in their suffering state. As who should say, my Brethren, as you are now afflicted, so sufferings are needful for you, and therefore profitable and advantagious: Wherefore be content to bear them. And that you may indeed bear them with such Christian contentedness, and patience as becomes you; commit the keeping of your souls to your God, as unto a faithful Creator.

Let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls unto him as unto a faithful Creator.

Advice to Sufferers. 3

In this conclusion, therefore, we have three things very fit for sufferers to concern themselves with.

1. A direction to a duty of absolute necessity.

2. A description of the persons, who are unto this so necessary a duty directed.

3. An insinuation of the good effect that will certainly follow to those that after a due manner shall take this blessed advice.

The duty so absolutely necessary, is, that sufferers *commit the keeping of their souls to God.*

The sufferers here intended, are, *those that suffer according to the will of God.*

The good insinuated, that will be the effect of our true doing of this, is, we shall find God *a faithful Creator.*

We will first, begin with the duty, that sufferers are here directed to, namely the committing of their souls to God: *Let them commit the keeping of their soul to him, in well doing.*

And I find two things in it that first call for explaining before I proceed.

B 2

1. What

4 Advice to Sufferers.

1. What we must here understand by *the Soul*.

2. What by *committing* the soul to God.

For the First ; *The soul*, here, is to be taken for that most excellent part of man, that dwelleth in the body ; that immortal, spiritual substance, that is, and will be capable of life, and motion, of sense and reason ; yea, that will abide a rational being, when the body is returned to the dust as it was. This is *that great thing*, that our Lord Jesus intends, when he bids his Disciples in a day of Tryal, *fear him that can destroy both body and soul in Hell*. (Luk. 12. 5.) That great thing, I say, that he there cautions them to take care of. According to *Peter* here, *Let them commit the keeping of their soul to him in well-doing*.

Secondly, Now to *commit* this soul to God, is to *carry* it to him, to lift it to him, upon my bended knees, and to pray him for the Lord Jesus Christs sake, to take it into his holy care, and to let it be under his keeping. Also, that he will please to deliver it from all those snares that are laid for it,

Advice to Sufferers.

it, 'twixt this and the next world, and that he will see that it be forth coming, safe and sound, at the Great and Terrible judgment, notwithstanding so many have ingaged themselves against it.

Thus *David* committed his soul to God, when he said *Arise, O Lord, disappoint him: cast him down: deliver my soul, O Lord, from the wicked, which is thy Sword.* And again, *Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me, O Lord, make hast to help me: let them be ashamed and confounded together, that seek after my soul to destroy it.* (Psal. 17. 13. Psal. 40. 13, 14.)

Thus, I have shewed you what the soul is, and what it is to commit the soul to God. This then is the duty that the Apostle here exhorteth the sufferers to, namely, to carry their soul to God, and leave it with him while they ingage for his name in the World.

Now from the Apostles Exhortation to this great duty, I will draw these following conclusions.

First, That when persecution is raised against a people, there is a design laid for the ruin of that peoples souls.

6 Advice to Sufferers.

This, I say, doth naturally follow from the exhortation. Why else, need they to commit the keeping of their souls to God. For by this word, *unto God to keep them*, is suggested; *there is*, that would destroy them, and that *therefore* persecution is raised against them.

I am not so uncharitable, as to think, that persecuting men design this: But I verily believe that the Devil doth design this, when he stirs them up to so sorry a work. In times of Tryal, says Peter, *The Devil your adversary goeth about like a roaring Lyon, seeking whom he may devour.* (1 Pet. 5. 8. 9.)

Alas! men in their acts of this nature, have designs that are lower, and of a more inferior rank: Some of them look no higher, than *revenge upon the carcass*; than the spoiling of their neighbour of his Estate, Liberty, or Life; than the greatening of themselves in this world, by the ruins of those that they have power to spoil. *Their possessors slay them, and hold themselves not guilty; and they that sell them, say, blessed be the Lord, for I am rich.* (Zech.

11. 4. 5.

Ay!

Advice to Sufferers.

7

Ay! But Satan will not be put off thus: 'tis not a bag of Money, or the punishing of the carcass of such a people, that will please or satisfie him. 'Tis the soul that he aims at; the ruin of the precious soul that he hath bent himself to bring to pass. 'Tis this therefore that *Peter* here hath his heart concerned with. As, who should say, my Brethren, are you troubled and persecuted for your Faith? look to it, the hand of Satan is in this thing, and what ever men drive at by doing as they do, the Devil designs no less than the damnation of your Souls.

Ware *Hawk*, saith the *Falconer*, when the Dogs are coming near her: specially if she be too much minding of her beauty, and too forgetful of what the nature of the Dog is. Beware Christian; the Devil is desirous to have thee.

And, who could better give this exhortation than could *Peter* himself. Who for not taking heed as to this very thing, had like by the Devil to have been swallowed up alive: as is manifest to them that heedfully read, and consider how far he was gone, when that

8 Advice to Sufferers.

persecution was raised against his Master. (*Luk. 22. 31-36, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62.*)

When a Tyrant goes to dispossess a neighbouring Prince of what is lawfully his own : the men that he imployeth at Arms to overcome, and get the Land : They fight for Half-Crowns, and the like, and are content with their wages : But the Tyrant is for the Kingdom, nothing will serve him but the Kingdom. This is the case ; Men when they persecute, are for the stuff, but the Devil is for the soul, nor will any thing less than that, satisfie him. Let him then that is a sufferer commit the keeping of his soul to God : lest *stuff*, and *soul*, and all be lost at once.

Secondly, A second conclusion that followeth upon these words, is this ; That *sufferers*, if they have not a care, may be too negligent as to the securing of their souls with God, even when persecution is upon them. For these words, as they are an *instruction*, so they are an *awakening instruction* ; they call as to people in danger ; as to people, not so aware of the danger, or as unto a people that forget (too much) that their souls,

souls, and the ruin of them, are sought after by Satan, when trouble attends them for the Gospel sake. As, who should say, when troubles are upon you for the Gospel sake, then take heed that you forget not to commit your souls to the keeping of God. We are naturally apt with that good man *Gideon*, to be threshing out our Wheat, that we may hide it from the *Midianites*, (*Judge* 6. 11.) but we are not so naturally apt to be busying our selves to secure our souls with God. The reason is, for that we are more flesh than spirit, and because the voice of the world makes a bigger sound in our carnal mind, than the word of God doth. Wherefore *Peter*, here, calls upon us as upon men of forgetful minds, saying, *Let them that suffer according to the will of God, have a care of their souls*, and take heed, that the fears of the loss of a little of this world, do not make them forget the fear of the losing of their souls. That Sufferers are subject to this, may appear by the *stir*, and *bustle* that at such a time they make to lock all up safe that the hand of man can reach, while they are cold, chill, remiss, and too

10 **Advice to Sufferers.**

indifferent about the committing of their soul to God to keep it. This is seen also, in that many, in a time of trouble for their profession, will study more to deceive themselves by a change of notions, by labouring to perswade their consciences to admit them to walk more at large, by harkening to opinions that please and gratifie the flesh, by adhering to bad examples, and taking evil Counsels, than they will to make straight steps for their feet: *and to commit the keeping of their souls to God.* What shall I say, have their not been many, that so long as peace has lasted, have been great swaggerers for Religion, who yet so soon as the Sun has waxt warm, have flagg'd; have been discontented, offended, and turned away from him that speaketh from heaven? All which is because men are naturally apt to be more concerned, for their goods, carnal peace, and a temporal life: than they are about securing of their souls with God. Wherefore I say, these words are spoken to *awaken* us to the consideration of *soul-concerns*, and how *that* should be safely lodged under the care, protection, and

Advice to Sufferers. 11

and mercy of God, by our committing of it to him, for that purpose, by Jesus Christ our Lord.

Thirdly, Another conclusion which followeth upon this exhortation, is this: That persecution doth, sometimes, so hotly follow Gods people, as to leave them nothing but a soul to care for. They have had no House, no Land, no Money, no Goods, no Life, no Liberty, left them to care for. All is gone but the soul. Goods have been confiscated, liberty has been in Irons, the life condemned, the neck in a Halter, or the body in the Fire: So then all, to such, has been gone, and they have had nothing left them, to care for, but their soul. Let them commit the keeping of their soul to God. This conclusion, I say, doth naturally flow from the words. For that the Apostle here doth make mention only of the soul, as of that which is left, as of that which yet remains to the sufferer of all that ever he had. Thus they served Christ, they left him nothing but his soul to care for. Thus they served Stephen, they left him nothing but his soul to care for, and they both cared for that. Father into thy hands I commend my spi-

rit, said Jesus. And Lord Jesus receive my spirit, said Stephen (Luk. 23. 46. Acts 7. 59.)

As for all other things, they were gone. They parted the very cloaths of Christ among themselves, before his face, even while he did hang pouring out his life before them, upon the Tree. *They parted my garments among them, said he, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.* (Mat. 27. 35. Mar. 15. 24. Joh. 19. 23, 24.) This also has oftentimes been the condition of later Christians, all has been gone, they have been stript of all, nothing has been left them but soul to care for. Job said, that he had escaped with the skin of his teeth: and that is but a little: but he doth not escape with so much, that loses all that he has, life and all, we now except the soul. But,

Fourthly, Another thing that followeth from the words is this, namely, That when the Devil and wicked men have done what they could, in their persecuting of the godly: they have yet had their souls at their own dispose. They have not been able to rob them of their souls, they are not able to hurt their souls. The soul

Advice to Sufferers. 11

Soul is not in their power to touch, without the leave of God, and of him whose soul it is. *And fear not them, faith Christ, that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul. (Mat. 10. 28.)* This, I say, lies clear also in the Text, for the exhortation supposes, that whatever the sufferers there made mention of, had lost: They had yet their souls at their own dispose. *Let them that suffer, even to the loss of goods, liberty or life, commit the keeping of their soul to God.* As, who should say, though the enemy hath reached them to their all, and stripped them of their all, yet I know, *that their soul is not among that all:* For their soul is yet free from them, at liberty, and may be disposed of, even as the sufferer will. Wherefore, let him commit the keeping of his soul to God, lest he also through his negligence or carelessness be also spoiled of that. The sufferer therefore hath his soul at his own dispose, he may give that away to God almighty, in spite of all that the Devil and the world can do. He may *indeed* see men parting his Land, his Household stuff, yea, his very Rayment among themselves,

14 Advice to Sufferers.

selves, but they cannot so dispose of his soul. They have no more that they can do. (*Luk. 12. 5.*)

Fifthly. Another conclusion that followeth from these words is this, *That a man, when he is a sufferer, is not able to secure his own soul from the hand of hell by any other means, but by the committing of the keeping thereof to God.* Do you suffer? are you in affliction for your profession? Then keep not your soul in your own hand, for fear of losing that with the rest. *For no man can keep alive his own soul,* (*Psal. 22. 29.*) No, not in the greatest calm; no, not when the Lyon is a sleep: how then should he do it at such a time, when the horrible blast of the terrible ones shall beat against his wall. The consideration of this was *that* that made holy *Paul*, who was a man upon whom persecution continually attended, commit his soul to God (*Acts 20. 23. 2 Tim. 1. 12.*) God as I shall shew you by and by, is he, and he alone that is able to keep the soul, and deliver it from danger. Man is naturally a self deceiver, and therefore is not to be trusted, any farther than as the watchful eye of God is over him. But as to his
soul

Advice to Sufferers. 15

of soul he is not be trusted with that at all, that must be wholly committed to God, left altogether with him; laid at his feet, and he also must take the charge thereof, or else 'tis gone, will be lost, and will perish for ever and ever. Wherefore 'tis a dangerous thing for a man that is a sufferer, to be a senseless man, as to the danger that his soul is in, and a prayerless man, as to the committing of the keeping of it to God. For he that is such, has yet his soul, and the keeping thereof, in his own deceitful hand. And so has he also that stays himself upon his friends, upon his knowledge, the promise of men, or the mercy of his enemies, or that has set in his mind a bound to himself, how far he will venture for Religion, and where he will stop. This is the man, that makes not God his trust, and that therefore will surely fall in the day of his temptation. Satan, who now *hunteth* for the precious soul to destroy it, has *Power*, as well as *Policy*, beyond what man can think. He has power to blind, harden, and to make insensible, the heart. He also can make *truth* in the eyes of the suffering man,

16. Advice to Sufferers.

a poor, little, and insignificant thing. Judas had not committed the keeping of his soul to God, but abode in himself, and was left in his Tabernacle: And you by and by see, what a worthy price he set upon himself, his Christ, and Heaven, and all. All to him was not now worth thirty pieces of Silver.

And, as he can make *truth* in thy esteem to be little, so he can make *sufferings* great, and ten times more terrible, than he that hath committed the keeping of his soul to God, shall ever find them. A Gaol shall look as black as *Hell*, and the loss of a few *Stools* and *Chairs*, as bad as the loss of so many baggs of Gold. Death for the Saviour of the World, shall seem to be a thing both unreasonable and intolerable. Such will chuse to run the hazzard of the loss of a thousand souls, in the way of the world, rather than the loss of one poor sorry, transitory life for the holy word of God. But the reason, as I said, is, they have not committed the keeping of their soul to God. For he that indeed has committed the keeping of his soul to that great one, has shaken his hands of all things here. Has bid *adieu* to

the

Advice to Sufferers. 17

the world, to friends, and life: and waiteth upon God in a way of close keeping to his truth, and walking in his wayes, having counted the cost, and been perswaded to take what cup God shall suffer the world to give him for so doing.

Sixthly, Another conclusion that followeth from these words is, *That God is very willing to take the charge and care of the soul (that is committed unto him) of them that suffer for his sake in the world.* If this were not true, the exhortation would not answer the end. What is intended by, *Let him commit the keeping of his soul to God*, but that the sufferer should indeed leave that great care with him? but if God be not willing to be concerned with such a charge, what bottom is there for the exhortation. But the exhortation has this for its bottom, therefore God is willing to take the charge and care of the soul of him that suffereth for his name in this world. The Lord *redeemeth the soul of his servants, and none of them that trust in him shall be de-
olate,* (1 Sam. 25. 28, 29. Psal. 34. 22.) None, not one that committeth his soul to Gods keeping in a way of well doing, but shall find him willing to be concerned therewith.

Ay,

18 Advice to Sufferers.

Ay, this, saith the sufferer, if I could believe this, it would rid me of all my fears. But I find my self ingaged for God, for I have made a profession of his name, and cannot arrive to this belief that God is willing to take the charge and care of my soul. Wherefore I fear, that if Tryals come so high, as that life, as well as state, must go, that both life, and Estate, and soul, and all will be lost at once.

Well honest heart, these are thy fears, but let them fly away, and consider the Text again. Let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to him as unto a faithful ~~Creator~~. These are Gods words, Christs words, and the invitation of the holy Ghost. When therefore thou readest them, be periwaded that thou hearest the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, all of them joynly, and severally speaking to thee and saying, Poor sinner, thou art ingaged for God in the world, thou art suffering for his word: leave thy soul with him as with one that is more willing to save it, than thou art willing he should: act faith, trust God, believe his word, and go on in thy way of witness.

Advice to Sufferers. 19

witness-bearing for him, and thou shalt find all well, and according to the desire of thy heart at last. True, Satan will make it his business to tempt thee to doubt of this, that thy way may be made yet more hard, and difficult to thee. For he knows that unbelief is a soul-perplexing sin, and makes that which would otherwise be light, pleasant, and easie; unutterably heavy and burdensome to the sufferer. Yea, this he doth in hope to make thee at last, to cast away thy profession, thy Cause, thy Faith, thy Conscience, thy soul and all. *But hear what the Holy Ghost saith again. He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy. He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence, and precious shall their blood be in his sight. (Psal. 72. 13, 14.)* These words also are spoken for the comfort of sufferers. *(ver. 12.) For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper.* Wherefore let them that are Gods sufferers, pluck up a good heart, let them not be afraid to trust God with their souls, and with their eternal concerns. *Let them cast all their care upon God, for he careth for them. (1 Pet. 5. 7.)*

But

But I am in the Dark.

I answer, never stick at that. 'Tis most bravely done, to trust God with my soul *in the dark*, and to resolve to serve God for *nothing*, rather than give out. *Not to see*, and yet *to believe*, and to be a follower of the Lamb, and yet to be at uncertainty, what we shall have at last; argues Love, Fear, Faith, and an honest mind, and gives the greatest sign of one that hath true sincerity in his soul. 'Twas this that made *Job* and *Peter* so famous, and the want of it that took away much of the glory of the faith of *Thomas*. (*Job* 1.8,9,10. *Mat.* 19.27. *Job.* 20.29.) Wherefore believe verily that God is ready, willing, yea, that he looks for, and expects that thou who art a sufferer shouldest commit the keeping of thy soul to him, as unto a faithful Creator.

Seventhly, Another conclusion that followeth from these words is this, namely, *That God is able as well as willing, to secure the souls of his suffering Saints, and to save them from the evil of all their Tryals, be they never so many, divers, or terrible.*

[Let

Advice to Sufferers. 21

[Let him commit the keeping of his soul to God] out to what boot. if he be not able to keep it in his hand, and from the power of him that seeks the soul to destroy it? *But my Father that gave them me, saith Christ, is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Fathers hand.* (Joh. 10. 29.) So then there can be no sorrow, affliction, or misery invented, by which the Devil may so strongly prevail, as thereby to pluck the soul out of the hand of him, who has received it, to keep it from falling, and perishing thereby. The Text therefore supposeth a sufficiency of power in God to support, and a sufficiency of comfort and goodness to imbolden the soul to endure for him: let Satan break out, and his instruments too, to the greatest degree of their rage and cruelty.

First, There is in God a sufficiency of power to keep them that have laid their soul at his foot to be preserved. And hence he is called the *Soul-keeper*, the *soul-preserver*. (Pro. 24. 12.) *The Lord is thy keeper, the Lord is thy shade, upon thy right hand. The Sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the Moon by night, the Lord shall*

shall preserve thee from all evil, he shall preserve thy soul. (Psal. 121. 5, 6, 7.)

The Sun shall not smite thee: that is, persecution shall not dry, and wither thee away to nothing (Mat. 13. 6. 21.)

But that notwithstanding, thou shalt be kept and preserved, carried through and delivered from all evil. Let him therefore commit the keeping of his soul to him, if he is in a suffering condition, that would have it secured and found safe and sound at last. For,

1. Then thine own natural weakness, and timorousness shall not overcome thee.

For it shall not be too hard for God.

God can make the most soft spirited man, as hard as an Adamant, harder than Flint, yea, harder than the northern Steel. Shall Iron break the northern

Iron, and the Steel? (Jer. 15. 12.) The

Sword of him is in vain that laies at a

Christian, when he is in the way of his

duty to God: if God has taken to him the

charge and care of his soul, He can

him with Brass, and make his hoofs of Iron

He can strengthen the Spoiled against

the strong: so that the spoiled shall come

against the fortrefs. (Ezek 13. 9. Deut

33. 25. Amos 5. 8.

Advice to Sufferers. 23

He can turn thee into another man, and make thee that which thou never wast. *Timorous Peter, fearful Peter*, he could make as bold as a Lyon. He that at one time was afraid of a sorry Girl, he could make at another, to stand boldly before the Council. (*Mat. 26. 69. Acts 4. 13.*) There is nothing too hard for God. He can say to them that are of a fearful heart, *be strong fear not*. He can say, let the weak say I am strong; by such a word, by which he created the world. (*Isa. 35. 3, 4. Zech. 12. 8.*)

2. Thine own natural darkness and ignorance shall not cause thee to fall; thy want of wit he can supply: He can say to the fools, be wise; not only by way of correction, but also by way of instruction too. *He hath chosen the foolish things of this world, to confound the wise: yea, things that are despised, and things which are not, hath God chosen to bring to nought things that are.* (*1 Cor. 1. 28.*) *Wisdom and might are his*: and when, and where he will work, none can at all withstand him. He can give thee the *omnipotent spirit of Wisdom, and Revelation* in the knowledge of his Son. (*Ephes. 1. 17.*) Yea, to do this, is that which he

chal-

24 Advice to Sufferers.

challengeth, as that which is peculiar to himself. *Who hath put wisdom in the inward part, or who hath given understanding to the heart.* (Job 30. 36.)

And that he will do this, that he hath promised, yea, promised to do it to that degree, as to make *his*, that shall be thus concerned for him, to *Toppe*, and *overtopp* all men that shall them oppose.

I, saith he, will give you a mouth and wisdom, that all your adversaries shall not be able to resist, or gain-say. (Luke 21. 15.)

3. Thine own *doubts* and *mistrusts* about what he will do, and about whether thou shalt go) when thou for him hast suffered a while) he can *resolve*, yea, *dissolve*, *crush*, and bring to nothing.

He can make fear flee far away and place heavenly confidence in its room. He can bring invisible, and eternal things to the eye of thy soul and make thee see that in those things, in which thine enemies shall see nothing, that thou shalt count worth the loss of ten thousand lives to enjoy. He can *pull* such things out of his bosom, and can *put* such things into thy mouth, yea, can make thee chuse to be gone, though

Advice to Sufferers. 25

though through the flames, than to stay here and die in *silken sheets*. Yea, he can himself come near, and bring his Heaven and Glory to thee. The spirit of glory and of God resteth upon them that are but reproached for the name of Christ. (1 Pet. 4. 14.) And what the spirit of glory is, and what is his resting upon his sufferers, is quite beyond the knowledge of the world, and is but little felt by Saints at peace: They be they that are engaged, and that are under the lash for Christ; they are they, I say, that have it and that understand something of it.

When *Moses* went up the first time into the Mount to God, the people reproached him for staying with him so long, saying, *As for this Moses, we wot not what is become of him*. Well, the next time he went up thither, and came down, the spirit of glory was upon him: his face shone (though he wist it not) to his honour, and their amazement. (Exod. 31. 1. chap. 34. 29-35.)

Also while *Stephen* stood before the Council to be accused, by *Suborned* men, *All that sat in the Council, looking stedfastly on him, saw his face, as it*
C had

had been the face of an Angel. Act. 6. 15. Those that honour God, he will honour; yea, will put some of his glory upon them, but they shall be honoured.

There is none can tell what God can do. He can make those *things*, that in themselves are most fearful and terrible to behold, the most pleasant, delightful, and desirable things. He can make a Gaol more beautiful than a palace; restrain, more sweet by far than liberty. And the reproach of Christ greater riches, than all the treasures in *Egypt*. (Heb. 11. 26.) 'Tis said of Christ, *That for the joy that was set before him, he endured the Cross, and despised the shame.* (Heb. 12. 2.) But,

Secondly, As there is in God a sufficiency of power to uphold, so there is in him also a sufficiency of comfort and goodness to imbolden us: I mean communicative comfort and goodness. Variety of, and the terribleness that attends afflictions, call, not only for the beholding of things, but also a laying hold of them by faith and feeling; now this also is with God to the making of his to sing in the *night*. *Paul and Silas sang in Prison, the Apostle went away from the Council rejoicing, when they*

Advice to Sufferers. 27

they had shamefully beaten them for their Preaching in the Temple. (*Acts* 5.)

But whence came this, but from an inward feeling by faith of the love of God, and of Christ, which passeth knowledge? Hence he says to those under afflictions, *fear none of those things that you shall suffer.* There are things to be suffered, as well as places to suffer in; and there are things to be let into the soul for its emboldening, as well as things to be shewed to it. (*Rev.* 2. 20. *Rom.* 5. 5.)

Now the things to be suffered are many, some of which are thus counted up, they were *Tortured*, had *cruel mockings* and *scourgings*; they were *stoned*, were *sawn asunder*, were *slain with the sword*, were *tempted*. They wandered about in *Sheep skins*, and *Goat-skins*, being destitute, afflicted, tormented (*Heb.* 11. 35.) These are some of the things that good men of old have suffered, for their profession of the name of Jesus Christ. All which they were enabled by him to bear, to bear with *Patience*; to bear with *rejoicing*; knowing in themselves that they had in heaven a better, and an *induring substance*.

28 Advice to Sufferers.

(Heb. 10. 32, 33, 34, 35, 36.)

And it is upon this account that *Paul* doth call to mind the most dreadfull of his afflictions, which he suffered for the Gospel sake with rejoycing ; and that he tells us that he was most glad , when he was in such infirmities. Yea, it is upon this account that he boasteth, and *vauvnteth* it over Death, Life, Angels, principalities, powers, things present, things to come, height, depth, and every other creature : for he knew that there was enough in that love of God , which was set on him through Christ, to preserve him , and to carry him through all, (2 Cor. 12. 9, 10. Rom. 8. 37, 38, 39.)

That God has done thus, a thousand instances might be given ; and that God will still do thus, for that we have his faithful promise. (*Isa.* 43. 2. 1 Cor. 10. 13.)

To the adversaries of the Church these things have also sometimes been shewed, to their amazement and confusion. God shewed to the King of *Babylon*, that he was with the three children in the Fiery Furnace ; God shewed to the King of *Babylon* again, that he would be where *his were* , though in the Lyons Dens

Advice to Sufferers. 29

Dens (*Dan. 3. 24. chap. 6. 24, 25, 26.*)

Also in later days, who so reads Mr. Fox's *Acts and Monuments*, will also find several things to confirm this for truth. God has power over all plagues, and therefore can either heighten, or moderate and lessen them at pleasure. He has power over *Fire*, and can take away the intolerable heat thereof. This those in the *Marian* days could also testifie, namely, *Hauks* and *Bainham*, and others: who could shout for joy, and clap their hands in the very flames for joy. God has power over *hunger*, and can moderate it, and cause that one meals meat shall go as far as forty were wont to do. This is witnessed in *Elias*, when he went for his life to the mount of God, being fled from the face of *Jezabel*. (*1 King. 19. 8, &c.*)

And what a good nights lodging had *Jacob*, when he fled from the face of his Brother *Esau*? When the earth was his Couch, the Stone his pillow, the Heavens his canopy, and the

30 Addice to Sufferers.

shades of the night his Curtains? (Gen. 28. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16.)

I can do all things, said *Paul*, through Christ strengthening me. And again, *I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christs sake.* But how can that be, since no affliction for the present seems joyous? I answer though they be not so in themselves, yet Christ by his presence can make them so. For then his power rests upon us. *When I am weak, saith he, then I am strong: then Christ doth in me mighty things. For my strength, saith Christ, is made perfect in weakness, (in affliction for the Gospel sake.)*

For when my people are afflicted, and suffer great distreis for me, then they have my comforting, supporting, imboldning and upholding presence to relieve them. An instance of which you have in the *three children*, and in *Daniel*, made mention of before. But what think you, did these servants of the God of *Jacob* feel, feel in their souls of his power and comforting presence, when they, for his name, were suffering of the
rage

Advice to Sufferers. 31

rage of their enemies. While also one like the Son of God was walking in the Fire with the three, and while *Daniel* sat and saw that the hands of Angels were made *Muzzels* for the Lyons mouths.

I say, was it not worth being in the *Furnace*, and in the *Den*, to see such things as these? O! the grace of God, and his spirit, and power, that is with them that suffer for him, if their hearts be upright with him: if they are willing to be faithful to him: if they have learned to say, *here am I*, when ever he calls them, and what ever he calls them to. Wherefore when *Peter* saith, *let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator*: He concludes, that how outrageous, furious, merciless, or cruel soever the enemy is: yet there, with him, they shall find help and succour, relief and comfort. For God is able to make such as do so, stand.

Eighthly, We will now come to touch upon that, which may more

32 Advice to Sufferers.

immediately be called the reason of this exhortation. For although all these things that have been mentioned before, may, or might be called reasons of the point: yet there are, that in my judgment, may be called reasons, which are yet behind. As,

First, Because, when a man has by faith and prayer committed the keeping of his soul to God, *he has the advantage of that liberty of soul to do, and suffer for God, that he cannot otherwise have.* He that has committed his soul to God to keep, is rid of that care, and is delivered from the fear of its perishing for ever.

When the *Jews* went to stone *Stephen*, they laid their clothes down at a distance from the place, at a young mans feet, whose name was *Saul*, that they might not be a cumber, or a trouble to them, as to their intended work. So we, when we go about to drive sin out of the world, in a way of suffering for Gods truth against it, we should lay down our souls at the feet of God to care for, that we may not be cumbered with the care of them our selves :

selves: also that our care of Gods truth may not be weakned, by such sudden and strong doubts, as will cause us faintingly to say, *but what will become of my soul?* When Paul had told his Son *Timothy*, that he had been before that *Lyon Nero*, and that he was at present delivered out of his mouth: he adds, *And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom.* He shall, and will: here is a man at liberty, here are no cumbersome fears. But how came the Apostle by this confidence of his well-being, and of his share in another world? Why, he had committed the keeping of his soul to God; (compare *2 Tim. 1. 12.* with chap. 4. 18.) For to commit the keeping of the soul to God, if it be done in faith and prayer, it leaves, or rather brings this holy boldness, and confidence into the soul. Suppose a man in the Country were necessitated to go to *London*, and had a great charge of money to pay in there. Suppose also, that the way thither was become

C 5

exceed-

exceeding dangerous because of the high-way-men that continually abide therein: what now must this man do to go on his Journey chearfully? Why, let him pay in his money to such a one in the Country as will be sure to return it for him at *London* safely. Why, this is the case, thou art bound for Heaven, but the way thither is dangerous. It is beset every where with evil Angels, who would rob thee of thy Soul. What now? Why, if thou wouldest go chearfully on in thy dangerous Journey, commit thy treasure, thy Soul to God to keep. And then thou mayest say with comfort, well, *that care is over*. For whatever I meet with in my way thither, my Soul is safe enough: the Thieves if they meet me, can't come at that; I know to whom I have committed my Soul, and I am perswaded, that he will keep *that* to my joy and everlasting comfort against the great day.

This therefore is one reason why we should (that suffer for Christ) commit the keeping of our Souls to God, because, a doubt about the well-being

being of that, will be a clog, a burden, and an affliction to our spirit; Yea, the greatest of afflictions, whilst we are taking up our Cross and bearing it after Christ. The joy of the Lord is our strength, and the fear of perishing is that which will be weakning to us in the way.

Secondly, we should commit the keeping of our Souls to God, because the final conclusion that merciless men do sometimes make with the servants of God, *is all on a sudden*. They give no warning before they strike. We shall not need here to call you to mind about the Massacres that were in *Ireland, Paris, Piedmont*, and other places: where the godly in the night, before they were well awake, had, some of them, their heart blood running on the ground. The savage Monsters crying out, kill, kill, from one end of a street, or a place, to the other. This was sudden, and he that had not committed his Soul to God to keep it, was surely very hard pnt to it now; but he that had done so, was ready for such sudden work. Some-
times

36 Advice to Sufferers.

times indeed, the *Ax* and *Halter*, or the *Faggot*, is shewed first; but sometimes again it is without that warning. Up, said Saul to Doeg the Edomite, and slay the priests of the Lord, 1 Sam. 22. 11-19. Here was sudden work, fall on, said Saul, and Doeg fell upon them, and slew on that day fourscore and five persons that did wear a linnen Ephod. Nob also the ci:y of the Priests he smote with the edge of the sword, both men and women, children, and sucklings, &c. Here was but a word and a blow. Thinkest thou not, who readest these lines, that all of these who had before committed their Soul to God to keep, were the fittest folk to die?

And immediately the King sent an Executioner, and commanded his head to be brought, Mark 6. 27. The story is concerning Herod and John the Baptist. Herod's dancing girl had begged John Baptist's head: and nothing but his head must serve her turn; well girl, thou shalt have it. Have it? I, but it will be long first. No, thou shalt have it now, just now, immediately. And immediately he sent an executioner, and

and commanded his head to be brought.

Here is sudden work for sufferers; here is no intimation before hand. The executioner comes to *John*; now, whether he was at dinner or asleep, or whatever he was about, the bloody man bolts in upon him, and the first word he salutes him with, is, Sir, strip, lay down your neck; *For I come to take away your head.* But hold, stay, wherefore? pray, let me commit my Soul to God. No, I must not stay, I am in hast; flap, says his sword, and off falls the good mans head. This is sudden work, work that stays for no man: work that must be done by and by, immediately or 'tis not worth a rush. *I will,* said she, *that thou give me by and by in a charger, the head of John the Baptist.* Yea, she came in hast, and as hastily the commandment went forth, and immediately his head was brought.

Thirdly, Unless a man commits the keeping of his Soul to God: it is a question whether he can hold out, and stand his ground, and wrestle with all temptations. (This is the victory, even

38 Advice to Sufferers.

even your Faith : and who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth? &c. And what encouragement has a man to suffer for Christ, whose heart cannot believe, and whose Soul he cannot commit to God to keep it?) And our Lord Jesus intimates as much, when he saith, *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a Crown of life.* Wherefore saith he thus? but to encourage those that suffer for his truth in the world, to commit the keeping of their Souls to him, and to believe that he hath taken the charge and care of them. Paul's wisdom was, that he was ready to die, before his enemies were ready to kill him. *I am now ready,* saith he, *to be offered up, and the time of my departure is at hand.* 2 Tim. 4. 6, 7, 8.

This is therefore a thing of high concern, to wit, the committing of the Soul to God to keep it. 'Tis, I say, of concern to do it now, just now, quickly, whether thou art yet engaged or no; for it is a good preparatory too, as well as profitable in a time of persecution : consider it, I say. The Apollie Paul saith, that

that he and his companions were hold in their God, to profess and stand to the word of God, 1 Thess. 2. 2. but how could that be, if they had the salvation of their Souls to seek, and that to be sure they would have had, had they not committed the keeping of their Souls to him in well-doing?

But what is committing of the Soul to God?

Answ. I have in general briefly spoken to that already, and now for thy further help, we will a little enlarge. Wherefore,

First, *To commit*, is to deliver up to custody to be kept. Hence prisoners when sent to the Gaol, are said to be committed thither. Thus *Paul* hated men and women, committing them to prison. And thus *Joseph's* master committed all his prisoners to him, to his custody, to be kept there according to the Law. (*Acts* 8. 3. *Gen.* 39. 22.)

Secondly, *to commit*, is not only to deliver up to custody, but to give in charge, that that which is committed, be kept safe, and not suffered to be lost. Thus *Paul* was committed to Prison,

40 Advice to Sufferers.

Prison, the Gaoler being charged to keep him safely. (Acts 16. 23. Luk. 16. 11.)

Thirdly, to *commit*, is to leave the whole disposal (sometimes) of that which is committed, to those to whom such thing is committed. Thus were the *Shields* of the Temple committed to the Guard, and *Jeremiah* to the hands of *Gadaliah*. (1 Kings 14. 27 Jer. 29. 14.)

And thus thou must *commit* thy Soul to God, and to his care, and keeping. It must be delivered up to his care, and put under his custody. Thou mayest also ('tho I would speak modestly) give him a charge to take the care of it. Concerning my sons, and concerning my daughters, and concerning the work of my hands, command ye me; Isai 45. 11. Thou must also leave all the concerns of thy Soul, and of thy being an inheritor of the next World, wholly to the care of God. He that doth this in the way that God has bid him, is safe, though the sky should fall. The poor committeth himself unto thee, thou art the helper of the fatherless. Ps. 10. 14.

And

Advice to Sufferers. 41

And for encouragement to do this, the Lord has bidden us, the Lord has commanded us, the Lord expecteth that we should thus do. Yea, thou art *also bidden* to commit thy way unto him, thy work unto him, thy cause unto him, thy Soul to him, and he will take care of all, *Psal. 37. 5. Pro. 16. 3. Job 5. 8.* And if we do this, as we should, God will not only take care of us, and of our Souls in the general, but that our *work and ways* be so ordered that we may not fail in either. *I have trusted, said David, in the Lord, therefore I shall not slide. Psal. 26. 1.*

Before I leave this, I will speak something of the way in which this commitment of the Soul to God must be. And that is *in a way of well-doing*, Let them commit the keeping of their Souls to him *in well-doing*: or in a way of well-doing. That is therefore the course that a godly man should be found in, *at, in, and after* he hath committed his Soul to God to keep. And as the Apostle says in an other place, This is but a reasonable service, *Rom. 12. 1.* For if God be so gracious as to take care of my Soul at my request, why

42 Advice to Sufferers.

why should not I also be so gracious as to be found in a way of *well-doing* at his bidding? Take care, Master, of me for meat and wages; and I will take care, Master, that thy work shall be faithfully done. This is honest, and thus should Christians say to God. And he that heartily in this shall mean as he saith, shall find that God's way shall be strength unto him.

A Christian is not to commit his Soul unto God to keep, and so to grow remiss, carnal, negligent, cold and worldly: concluding as if he had now bound God to save him, but set himself at liberty, whether he will longer serve him in trying and troublesome times, or no. He must commit the keeping of his Soul to him *in well-doing*. He may not now relinquish Gods cause, play the Apostate, cast off the Cross, and look for Heaven notwithstanding. He that doth thus will find himself mistaken, and be made to know at last that God takes the care of no such Souls. *If any man draws back, saith he, my Soul shall have no pleasure in him.* Wherefore he that commit-

teeth

teth the keeping of his Soul to God, must do it in that way which God has prescribed to him, which is in a way of *well-doing*. Alas, alas! there is never such a word in it: it must be done in a way of *well-doing*. You must think of this that would commit your Souls to God in suffering and troublesome times.

You must do it *in well-doing*.

In *well-doing*, that is in persevering in ways of godliness, both with respect to morals, and also instituted worship. Thou therefore that wouldst have God take care of thy Soul: as thou believest, so thou must *do well*, that is, do good to the poor, to thy neighbour, to all men; specially, to the household of Faith. *Benjamin* must have a *Benjamins* mess: and all others, as thou art capable, must feel and find the fruit of thy Godliness. Thou must thus serve the Lord with much humility of mind, tho' thorough many difficulties, and much temptation.

Thou must also keep close to Gospel-worship, publick and private; doing of those things that thou hast warrant for from the Word, and leaving
of

44 Advice to Sufferers.

of that, or those things, for others that will stick to them, that have no stamp of God upon them. Thou must be found doing of all with all thy heart, and if thou sufferest for so doing, thou must bear it patiently. For what *Peter* saith to the women he spake to, may be applied to all believers, *whose daughters you are*, saith he, *meaning Sarahs, so long as you do well, and are not afraid with any amazement,* 1 Pet. 3. 6.

So then, the man that has committed his Soul to God to keep, has not at all disingaged himself from his duty, or took himself off from a perseverance in that good work that under a suffering condition he was bound to do before. No, his very committing of his Soul to God, to keep it, has laid an ingagement upon him to abide to God in *that* calling, wherein he is called of God. To commit my Soul to God, supposes my sensibleness of hazzard and danger; but there is none among men when the offence of the Cross is ceased. To commit my Soul to God to keep, concludes my resolution to go on in that good way of God that is so dangerous

gerous to my Soul, if God taketh not the charge and care thereof. For he that saith in his heart, I will now commit my soul to God, if he knows what he says, says thus: *I am for holding on in a way of bearing of my Cross after Christ, tho' I come to the same end for so doing, as he came to before me. This is committing the Soul to him in well-doing.*

Look to your selves therefore who ever you are that talk of leaving your Souls with God, but do live loose, idle, profane, and wicked lives. God will not take care of such mens Souls; they commit them not unto him as they should. They do but flatter him with their lips, and lie unto him with their tongue, and think to deceive the Lord. But to no purpose. He that sows to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption. 'Tis he that sows to the Spirit, that shall reap life everlasting, *Galat. 6. 7, 8.*

I shall come now to the second thing contained in the Text, namely, *To give you a more distinct description of the men that are thus bid to commit the keeping of their souls to God.*

And

46 Advice to Sufferers.

And they are thus described [They that suffer according to the will of God.] *Let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their Souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator.*

Two things are here to be inquired into.

1. What the Apostle here means by *the will of God.*

2. What *suffering according to the will of God*, is.

First, *For the will of God*, it is divers ways taken in the Scriptures: as sometimes forelecting, justifying, sanctifying acts of God: Sometimes for Faith, good Life, and sometimes for suffering for his name. *Rom. 9. Ephes. 1. 11. Rom. 4. 6, 7, 8. John. 7. 17. 1 John 3. 23. 1 Thes. 4. 3. Mat. 7. 21.* But *by will of God*, here, we must

1. Understand, *his Law and Testament.*

2. *His order and designment.*

First, *By his will*, I understand, *his Law and Testament.* This is called *the revealed will of God.* Or that by which he has made himself, and how
he

Advice to Sufferers. 47

he will be worshipped, known unto the children of men. Now, I understanding these words thus, must before I go further, make this distinction, to wit, That there is a difference to be put betwixt them that suffer for the *breach*, and those that suffer for *keeping* of this Law and Testament! For tho' both of them may suffer *by* the will of God: yet they are not both concerned in this Text. A *malefactor*, that suffereth for his evil deeds, the due punishment thereof; suffereth as other Texts declare, *according to the will of God*. But, I say, this Text doth not concern it self with them. For both this Text, and this Epistle is writ for the counsel and comfort of those that suffer for keeping the Law and Testament of God, that suffer for *well-doing*, 1 Pet. 3. 13, 14, 17. Chap. 4. 13, 14.

The man then that is concerned in this advice, is he *that suffereth from the hands of men, for keeping of the word of God*. And this is he that has licence, leave, yea a command to *commit the keeping of his Soul to God in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator*.

We

We will a little enlarge upon this. He that keepeth the word of God, is such an one that has regard to both the *matter*, and *manner* thereof. The *matter* is the Truth, the Doctrine contained therein; the *manner* is that comely, godly, humble, faithful way of doing it, which becomes a man that has to do with the Law and Testament of God. And both these are contained in the Text. For, first, here is the *will* of God to be done; and then, secondly, to be done *according* to his will. *Let them that suffer according to his will.* Which words, I say, take in both *matter*, and *manner* of doing. So then, the man that here we have to do with, and to discourse of, is a man that in the *sence now given*, suffereth. That which makes a *Martyr*, is suffering for the word of God after a right manner. And that is, when he suffereth, not only for *righteousness*, but for *righteousness sake*: not only for *truth*, but of love to truth; not only for God's word, but *according* to it: to wit in that holy, humble, meek manner as the word of God requireth. A man may
give

Advice to Sufferers. 49

give his body to be burned for Gods truth, and yet be none of *God's martyrs*.

1 Cor. 13. 1, 2, 3. Yea, a man may suffer with a great deal of patience, and yet be none of Gods *Martyrs*, 1 Pet. 2. 20. The one, because he wanteth that grace that should poise his heart, and make him right in the manner of doing: the other, because he wanteth that word of the Holy One that alone can make his cause good *as to matter*.

'Tis therefore *matter* and *manner* that makes the *Martyr*: and 'tis this man that is intended in the Text which is aforesaid described.

So then, they that suffer for the Law and Testament of God in that holy and humble manner that the word requires, they are they that, by this word of God, are commanded to commit the keeping of their Souls to God.

From this consideration, two things present themselves to our sight.

First, That a man may be a Christian, and suffer, and yet not suffer, in the sense last given, according to the will of God.

Secondly, There have been, and may yet be a people in the world that

D

have,

have, and may suffer, in the sence of the Apostle here, *according to the will of God.*

A few words to the first of these, namely, *that a man may be a Christian, and suffer*, and yet not suffer, in the sence of the Apostle in the Text, *according to the will of God.* He may be a Christian and yet not suffer *as a Christian.* He may want the *matter*, or, he may want the *manner*, of suffering as a Christian.

This is evident from what this Apostle suggests in several places of this Epistle. For,

1. Saith he, *If ye be buffeted for your faults*, chap. 2. 20.

This supposeth that a Christian may so be; for he speaketh here to the same people, unto whom he speaketh in the Text, though he putterh them not under the same circumstance, as suffering for *well-doing*. If ye be buffeted for your faults, *for what Gods word calls faults*, What thank have you (from God, or good men) tho' you take it patiently?

So again, *For it is better if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well-doing than for evil-doing.* Chap, 3. 17. Here 'tis plainly supposed that a Christian
man

Advice to Sufferers. 51

man may suffer for *evil-doing*, yea, that the will of God may be, that he should suffer for *evil-doing*. For God, if Christians do not well, will vindicate himself by punishing of them for their doing ill. Yea, and will not count them worthy, tho' they be his own, to be put among the number of those that suffer for *doing well*.

Again, *But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil doer, or as a busy-body in other mens matters.*

Chap. 4. 15. These are cautions to Christians to perswade them to take heed to themselves, their tongues, and their actions, that all be kept within the bounds of the word. For it would be a foolish thing to say, *That these are cautions to perswade to take heed of that, into which it is not possible one should fall.* 'Tis possible for Christians to suffer for *evil-doing*, and therefore let Christians beware; 'tis possible for Christians to be brought to publick Justice, for their faults, and therefore let Christians beware. 'Tis possible for Christians to suffer justly by the hand of the Magistrate, and therefore let Christians beware.

This also is insinuated in the Text it self, and therefore let Christians beware.

The causes of this are many, some of which I shall now briefly touch upon.

1. Sin is in the best of men: and as long as it is so, without great watchfulness, and humble walking with God, we may be exposed to shame, and suffering for it. What sin is it that a child of God is not liable to commit (excepting that which is the sin unpardonable)? Nor have we a promise of being kept from any other sin, but on condition that we do watch and pray.

Mat. 26. 41.

2. 'Tis possible for a Christian to have an erroneous conscience in some things, yea, in such things as (if God by his grace prevents not) may bring us to publick justice and shame. *Abishai*, tho' a good man, would have kill'd the King, and that of conscience to God, and love to his Master. *1 Sam. 26. 7. 8.* And had *David* delivered him up to *Saul* for his attempt, he had in all likelihood died as a Traitor. *Peter* drew his Sword, and would have fought therewith, a thing for which he was

was blamed of his Master, and bid with a threatning, to put it up again.

Mar. 26. 52.

Besides, Oppression makes a wise man mad; and when a man is mad, what evils will he not do?

Further, The Devil, who is the great enemy of the Christians, can send forth such Spirits into the World as shall not only disturb Men, but Nations, Kings, and Kingdoms, in raising divisions, distractions and rebellions. And can so manage matters, that the looser sort of Christians may be also dipt, and concerned therein. In *Absaloms* conspiracy, against his Father, there were two hundred men called out of *Jerusalem* to follow him, and they went in their simplicity, not knowing anything. 2 Sam. 15. 10. 11.

I thank God I know of no such men, nor thing: but my judgment tells me, that if Christians may be drawn into Fornication, Adultery, Murder, Theft, Blasphemy, or the like, (as they may); why should it be thought impossible for them to be drawn in here. Wherefore I say again, watch and pray,

54 Advice to Sufferers.

fear God, reverence his word, approve of his appointments, that you may be delivered from every evil *work and way*.

I said afore that the *will of God may be*, that a Christian should suffer as an evil doer: but then it is because he keepeth not within the bounds of *that*, which is also called the *will of God*. The will of God is, that sin should be punished, tho' committed by the Christians; punished according to the quality of transgressions: and therefore, it is that he hath ordained Magistrates. Magistrates, to punish sin, tho' it be the sin of Christians. They are the Ministers of God, revengers, to execute wrath, the wrath of God upon them that do evil. *Rom, 13.*

Wherefore, tho' the Christian as a Christian is the only man at liberty, as called thereunto of God; yet his liberty is limited to things that are good: he is not licensed thereby to indulge the flesh. Holiness and liberty are joyned together, yea our call to liberty, is a call to holiness. See, and you shall find, that a quiet and peaceable life, in our respective places, under
the

Advice to Sufferers. 55

the Government, is that which we should pray for, to wit, that we may without molestation, if it were *the will of God*, spend our days in all godliness and honesty among our neighbours. See 1 *Tim.* 2. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. 1 *Pet.* 2. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17.

I would improve this a little, and First, to Christians as Christians: Beware the cautions, that are here presented to you, be not neglected by you. The evils are burning hot, as hot as a red hot Iron. It is the greatest blemish that can be to a Christian, to suffer as an evil doer. To say nothing of the reproach that such do bring to the name of Christ, *their* Lord; to his Law, *their* rule; and to the *Christian* profession, which should be *their* glory: the guilt and shame that evil actions will load the conscience with at such a time, can hardly be stood under: The man that suffereth as an evil doer, and yet weareth the name of a Christian, what stumbling blocks doth he lay in the way of the ignorant in a Kingdom? The Devil told them before, that a Christian was a mischievous man; and

to suffer for evil-doing, confirms them in that belief.

Consider also the difficulties that surely such must meet with in the last minutes of their life. For can it be imagined but that such an one must have combats and conflicts at the last, who carry in their consciences the guilt and condemnation that is due to their deeds, to the place which Magistrates have appointed for them to receive the reward of their works at.

Such an one bereaves not only his own Soul of peace, and his name of credit, but himself of life, his friends of all cause of rejoycing, and casteth reproach upon Religion, as he is stepping out of the world.

What shall I say, Christians, as Christians, have other things to do than to concern themselves in evil things, or to meddle in other mens matters. Let us mind our own business, and leave the Magistrate to his work, Office and Calling among men also.

I speak now to them that are not by the King called to that imploy. A
Christian

Christian as such has enough to do at home in his Heart, in his House, in his Shop, and the like. But if thou must needs be meddling, consider what place, Office, calling or relation, God has put thee in, and busie thy self by the rule of the word to a consciencious performance of that. Nor shalt thou want Dignity tho' thou art but a *private* Christian. Every Christian man is made a King by Christ. (*Revel. 5. 9, 10.*) But then, his dominion as such, doth reach no further than to himself. He has not dominion over anothers faith (*2 Cor. 1. 24.*). His Office is to govern, and bridle, and keep under himself: to watch over himself, and to bring his body into subjection *to the will of God*. The weapons that he has for this purpose, are not, carnal, but spiritual, and mighty thorough God. Let him govern then, if he will be a Governour, his whole man by the word. Let him bring down, if he must be bringing down, his own high imaginations, and every high thing that exalts it self against the knowledge of God. If he must be a Warri-

58 Advice to Sufferers.

or, let him *levy* War against his own unruly passions, and let him fight against those lusts that war against his Soul (2 Cor. 10. 3, 4, 5. Gal. 5. 17. James 3. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. 1 Pet. 2. 11.)

I say therefore, if thou wilt needs be a Ruler, thou hast a tongue, rule that; Lusts, rule them; Affections, govern them; yea, thou hast excellent Graces, manage them, cherish, strengthen and replenish them according to the mind of that great one who has bestowed such power to rule, upon thee.

Mortifie, therefore, your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is Idolatry.

(Colos. 3. 5.) Nor do I think that *murmuring, shrinking, whining, complaining,* and the like, when men, Governours, lay a yoke upon our necks, flows from any thing else, but love to our flesh, and distrust of the faithfulness of God to manage men, things, and actions for his Church. The powers that be, are *ordered*, as well as *ordained* of God. They are also always in

Gods

Advice to Sufferers. 59

Gods hand, as his rod or staff for the good and benefit of his people. Wherefore we ought with all meekness and humbleness of mind to accept of what our God by them shall please to lay upon us. (1 Pet. 5. 6.)

By what I now say, I do not forbid groaning and crying to God under affliction. I speak against striving to deliver our selves from the affliction. And since men are, as I said, the rod, staff or sword in Gods hand, we should apply our selves unto him in faith in a way of Prayer, Intercession, Supplication and giving of thanks for Governours. For since they are sent of God, they must needs come with some good in their hand for us, also our prayers may make them more profitable to us. And this we ought to do without wrath and doubting; for this is that which is good, and acceptable unto God. (1 Tim. 2.)

Besides, 'tis a sign that we forget our selves when we complain for the punishment of our sins. If we look into our selves, and wayes, we shall see cause of more heavy stripes than yet
God

60 Advice to Sufferers.

God by men has laid upon us. What sin has yet been suppressed, by all that has happened to us: Are Pride, Covetousness, Loosness Treacherous dealing, Schisms, and other things, redressed by all the affliction that we have had? Yea, do we not grow worse and worse? Wherefore then should we complain? Where is Repentance, Reformation, and amendment of life amongst us? Why then, do we *shrink* and *whinch*. For my part, I have oft-times stood amazed both at the *mercy* of God, and the *favour* of the Prince towards us; and can give thanks to God for both: and do make it my Prayer to God for the King, and that God will help me with meekness and patience to bear what ever shall befall me for my professed subjection to Christ, by men.

We are bid, as I said afore, to give thanks to God for all men, *for Kings,* and *for all that are in authority*. Because, as I said, there is no man with whom we have to do (we doing as we should) but he bringeth some good thing to us, or doth some good thing for us. We
will

will now descend from them that are *supreme* in authority, and will come to *inferior* men: And suppose some of them to act beyond measure, cruelly. What? Can no good thing come to us out of this? Do not even such things as are most bitter to the flesh, tend to awaken Christians to Faith and Prayer, to a sight of the emptiness of this World, and the fadingness of the best it yields? Doth not God by these things (oft-times) call our sins to remembrance, and provoke us to amendment of life? how then can we be offended at things by which we reap so much good, and at things that God makes so profitable for us?

Doth not God, oft-times, even take occasions by the hardest of things that come upon us, to visit our Souls with the comforts of his Spirit, to lead us into the glory of his word, and to cause us to savour that love that he has had for us, even from before the world began, till now. *A nest of Bees and honey did Sampson find, even in the belly of that Lion that roared upon him.* And is all this no good? or can we be without

62 Advice to Sufferers.

out such holy appointments of God? Let these things be considered by us, and let us learn like Christians to kiss the Rod, and love it.

I have thought, again, my brethren, since it is required of us that we give thanks to God for *all* these men; it follows that we do with quietness submit our selves under what, God shall do to us by them. For it seems a Paradox to me, to give thanks to God for them, that yet I am not willing should abide in that place that God has set them in for me. I will then *love* them, *blest* them, *pray* for them, and do *them good*. I speak now of the men that hurt me as was hinted afore. And I will do thus, because it is good so to do, because they do *me good* by *hurting* of me, because I am called to inherit a blessing, and because I would be like my heavenly Father. *Therefore if mine enemy hunger, let me feed him; if he thirst, let me give him drink.* (Mat. 5. 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48. 1 Pet. 3. 9. Rom. 12. 17, 20)

1. We.

Advice to Sufferers. 63

1. *We must see good in that, in which other men can see none.*

2. *We must pass by those injuries that other men would revenge.*

3. *We must shew we have grace, and that we are made to bear what other men are not acquainted with.*

4. *Many of our graces are kept alive by those very things that are the death of other mens Souls.*

Where can the excellency of our Patience, of our meekness, of our long-suffering, of our love, and of our Faith appear, if it be not under Tryals, and in those things that run cross to our flesh? The Devil, they say, is good *when he is pleased*: But Christ and his Saints, *when displeased*.

Let us therefore covet to imitate Christ and the Scripture Saints. Let us shew out of a good conversation, our works with meekness of wisdom. Let us take heed of admitting the least thought in our minds of evil, against God, the King, or them that are under him in imploy, because, the cup, the King, all men, and things are in the hand of God. (*Psal.* 75. 8. *Pro.* 8. 15. *Chap.* 21. 1. *Lam.* 3. 37. and
he.

64 Advice to Sufferers.

he can make them better to us, than if they were as our flesh desireth they should.

I have often thought that the best Christians are found in the worst of times: and I have thought again, that one reason why we are no better, is because God purges us no more (*Joh. 15*) I know these things are against the grain of the flesh, but they are not against the *graces* of the spirit. *Noah* and *Lot*, who so holy as they, in the day of their affliction? *Noah* and *Lot*, who so idle as they in the day of their prosperity? I might have put in *David* too, who while he was afflicted, had ways of serving God that were special; but when he was more enlarged, he had ways that were not so good. Wherefore the *first wayes* of *David* are the ways that God has commended; but the rest of his wayes, such as had not preheminance. (*2 Chro. 17. 3.*)

We have need of all, and of more than all that has yet befallen us: and are to thank God, since his word and patience have done no more good to us, that he hath appointed men to
make

Advice to Sufferers. 65

make us better. Wherefore for a conclusion, as we are to receive with meekness the engrafted word of God: so also we are with patience to bear what God by man shall lay upon us. O that saying of God to them of old, (*Why cryest thou for thine affliction? thy sorrow is incurable for the multitude of thy iniquities: because thy sins were increased, I have done these things unto thee.* (Jer. 30. 15.) We have need to consider of, and to sit still and be quiet, and reverence the ordinance of God: I mean affliction.

And until we can in truth get hither in our Spirits, I neither look to find very right Christianity amongst us, nor much of God among professors. When I think of *Mordecai*, and *Daniel*, yea, and of *David* too, and of the behaviour of them all with respect to the powers that they were under: I cannot but think that a sweet, meek, quiet, loving, godly submission unto men for the Lords sake, is an excellent token of the grace of God in us. But,

Secondly,

66 Advice to Sufferers.

Secondly, as I cannot but condemn the actions of such Christians as have been touched afore: so I would caution weak Christians not to be offended with true Religion, for the miscarriages of their fellows. There are two things that are very apt to be an occasion of offence to the weak: one is, when the cross attends Religion: the other is, when others that profess Religion do suffer, for evil doing. To both these I would say this.

First, tho' the Cross, indeed, is grievous to the flesh, yet we should with grace bear up under it, and not be offended at it.

Secondly, and as to the second, tho' we should and ought to be offended with such miscarriage; yet not with Religion, because of such miscarriage. Some indeed, when they see these things, take offence against Religion it self. Yea, perhaps are glad of the occasion, and so fall out with Jesus Christ, saying to him, because of the evils that attend his ways, as the ten Tribes said to *Reboboam*, the son of *Solomon* the King, *What portion have we*

we

Advice to Sufferers. 67

we in David? neither have we inheritance in the Son of Jesse : to your tents, O Israel : now see to thine own house, David. (1 Kings 12. 16.) and so go quite away from him, and cleave no more unto him, to his people or to his ways: But this is bad. Shun therefore the evil ways of Christians, but cleave to the way that is Christian : cast away that bad Spirit that thou seest in any ; but hold fast to thy head and Lord. Whither canst thou go? *the Lord Jesus has the words of eternal life (John 6.)* Whither wilt thou go? there is not salvation in any other (*Acts 4. 12.)* Take heed therefore of picking a quarrell with Jesus Christ, and with his ways, because of the *evil doings* of some of his followers. *Judas* sold him, *Peter* denyed him, and many of his Disciples went back and did walk no more with him : but neither himself nor his ways were the worse for that. Beware therefore that thou truly distinguish between the *good* ways of Jesus Christ, and the *evil* ways of them that profess him ; and take not an occasion to throw away thy own *Soul* down

68 Advice to Sufferers.

down the throat of Hell, because others have vilely cast away their *lives* by transgressing of the Law of God. Nay let other mens faults make thee more wary; let other mens falls make thee look better to thy goings: Shun the rock that he that went before thee, did split his Ship against, and crie to God to lead thee in a path that is plain and good, because of thy observers.

Further, let not opposite Christians rejoyce when they see that *evil* hath taken their Brother by the heel. Hate the garment, the thing that is bad, and by which the name, and fame, and life of thy Brother is so vilely cast away, thou shouldest; (and take good head lest it also touch thee) but yet thou shouldest pity thy Brother, mourn for his hard happ, and grieve that a thing so much unbecoming Christianity, should be suffered to shew the least part of it self among any of those that profess the Gospel.

Directions for the shunning of suffering for evil-doing, are they that come next to hand.

1. Therefore,

Advice to Sufferers. 69

1. Therefore, wouldest thou not suffer as evil doer, *then take heed of committing of evil.* Evil courses bring to evil ends ; shun all appearance of evil, and ever follow that which is good. *And if ye be followers of that which is good, who will harm you?* (1 Pet. 3. 13.) Or if there should be such enemies to goodness in the world as to cause thee for *that* to suffer : thou needest not be ashamed of thy suffering for *well-doing*, nor can there be a good man, but he will dare to own and stand by thee in it. Yea, thy sufferings for *that* will make thee happy, so that thou canst by no means be a loser thereby.

2. Wouldest thou not suffer for *evil-doing*, *then take heed of the occasions of evil.* Take heed of tempting company. Beware of men, for they will deliver thee up. There have been men in the world, that have sought to make themselves out of the ruins of other men. This did Judas, and some of the Pharisees. (Matt. 10. 17. Luk. 20. 19, 20.) Take heed to thy mouth : *A fools mouth calleth for strokes, and his lips are*

70 Advice to Sufferers.

are a snare to his soul. (Pro. 18. 7.)
Take heed of indulging, and hearken-
ing to the ease of the flesh, and of car-
nal reasonings, for that will put the
upon wicked things.

2. Wouldest thou not suffer as an
evil-doer; then take heed of *hearing of*
any thing spoken that is not according to
sound Doctrine: thou must withdraw
thy self from such, in whom thou per-
ceivest not the words of knowledge.
Let not talk against Governours, a-
gainst Powers, against Men in Autho-
rity be admitted; keep thee far from
an evil matter. *My Son, says Solomon,*
fear thou the Lord, and the King, and
meddle not with those that are given to
change.

4. Wouldest thou not suffer as an
evil-doer; addict not thy self to play
with evil, to joque and jest, and mock
at men in Place and Power. *Gaal*
mocked at Abimelech, and said, Who is
Abimelech, that we should serve him? But
he paid for his disdainful language at
last (*Judges 9.*)

I have heard of an *Inn-keeper* here in
England, whose sign was the *Crown*,
and

and he was a meery man; Now he had a Boy, of whom he used to say when he was jovial among his Guests, This Boy is heir to the *Crown*, or this Boy shall be heir to the *Crown*; and, if I mistake not the story, *for these words he lost his life.*

'Tis bad jesting with great things, with things that are Gods ordinance, as Kings and Governours are. Yea, let them rather have that fear, that honour, that reverence, that worship, that is due to their place, their office, and dignity. How *Paul* gave honour and respect unto those that were but deputy Kings and heathen Magistrates, will greatly appear, if you do but read his Trials before them in the Book called the *Acts of the Apostles*. And what a charge both he and *Peter* have left behind them, to the Churches to do so too, may be found to conviction, if we read their Epistles.

5. Wouldest thou not suffer for *evil-doing*; then take heed of being offended with Magistrates, because by their State-Acts they may cross thy inclinations. 'Tis given to them to bear the Sword, and a command is to thee, if thy heart

heart cannot *acquiesce* with all things, with meekness and patience to suffer. Discontent in the mind, sometimes puts discontent into the mouth; and discontent in the mouth, doth sometimes also put a halter about the neck. For as a man by speaking a word in jest, may for that be hanged in earnest; so he that speaks in *discontent*, may die for it in *sober sadness*. *Adonijah's* discontent put him upon doing that which cost him his life, (1 King. 2. 13-23.) *Great peace have they that love thy Law, and nothing shall offend them: for they are subjected to the will, and foot of God.*

6. But above all, get thy conscience possessed yet more with this, that the Magistrate is God's ordinance, and is ordered of God as such: that he is the Minister of God to thee for good, and that it is thy duty to fear him, and pray for him, to give thanks to God for him, and to be subject to him as both *Paul* and *Peter* admonish us: *and that not only for wrath, but for conscience sake,* (Rom. 13.) For all other arguments come short of binding the Soul,

Advice to Sufferers. 73

Soul, where this argument is wanting; until we believe, that of God we are bound thereto. I speak not these things, as knowing any that are dissaffected to the Government: (for I love to be alone, if not with godly men, in things that are convenient.) But because I appear thus in publick, and know not into whose hands these lines may come, therefore thus I write. I speak it also to shew my Loyalty to the King, and my love to my fellow Subjects: and my desire that all Christians should walk in ways of peace and truth.

I come now to the second thing propounded to be spoken to, as to suffering, which is this.

That there have been, and yet may be a people in the world, that have and may suffer in the sence of the Apostle here, according to the will of God, or for righteousness sake.

That there have been such a people in the world, I think no body will deny, because many of the Prophets, Christ, and his Apostles thus suffered. Besides, since the Scriptures were writ-

E

ten,

ten, all Nations can witness to this, whose Histories tell at large of the patience and goodness of the sufferers, and of the cruelty of those that did destroy them.

And that the thing will yet happen, or come to pass again, both Scripture and reason affirm.

First for Scripture. The Text tells us, *that God hath put enmity betwixt the woman and her seed, and the Serpent and his,* (Gen. 3. 15.) This enmity put, is so fixed that none can remove it so, but that it still will remain in the world. These two seeds have *always* had, and will have that which is essentially opposite to one another, and they are the *spirit of truth*, and the *Spirit of error*; sin and righteousness, light and darkness. (1 John 4. 6. chap. 3. 7, 8. 1 Thes. 5. 5. Hence *an unjust man is an abomination to the just, and he that is upright in the way, is abomination to the wicked* (Prov. 29. 27. So that unless you could sanctifie and regenerate all men, or cause that no more wicked men should any where be in Power for ever: you cannot prevent but that sometimes still there must

must be sufferers for righteousness sake. *Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution* (2 Tim. 3. 12.)

To prove this by reason, is easie. The Devil is not yet shut up in the bottomless pit: Antichrist is yet alive. The Government in all Kingdoms is not yet managed with such light, and goodness of mind, as to let the Saints serve God, *as he has said*, what ever it is in some.

And until then, there will be in some places, tho' for my part I cannot predict where, a people that will yet suffer for *well-doing*, or for righteousness sake.

In order to a right handling of this matter, I shall divide this head into these two parts.

1. Shew you what it is to suffer for *well-doing*, or for righteousness.

2. Shew you what it is to suffer for *righteousness sake*.

I put this distinction, because I find that it is one thing to suffer for *righteousness*, and another to suffer for *righteousness sake*.

To begin with the first, namely to shew you what it is to suffer for righteousness. Now that may be done either passively or actively.

1. *Passively*, as when any suffer for righteousness without their own will, or consent thereto. Thus the little children at Bethlehem suffered by the hands of bloody Herod, when they died for, or in the room and stead of Jesus Christ (Mat. 2. 16.) Every one of those children died for righteousness, if Christ is righteousness; for they died upon his account, as being supposed to be he himself.

Thus also the children of *Israel's* little ones, that were murdered with their Parents, or otherwise, because of the Religion of them that begat and bare them, died for righteousness. The same may be said concerning those of them that suffered in the Land of the *Chaldeans* upon the same account.

I might here also bring in those poor Infants that in *Ireland, Piedmont, Paris*, and other places, have had their throats cut, and their brains dashed against the walls, for none other cause,
but

but for the Religion of their Fathers. Many, many have suffered for *righteousness* after this manner. Their will, nor consent, has been in the suffering, yet they have suffered for Religion, for righteousness. And as this hath been, so it may be again: for if men may yet suffer for *righteousness*, even so for ought I know, even in this sense, may their children also.

Now, although this is not the chief matter of my Text, yet a few words here may do no harm. The children that thus suffer, tho' their own will and consent be not in what they undergo, may yet, for all that, be accepted as an offering unto the Lord. Their cause is good; 'tis for Religion and righteousness. Their hearts do not recoil against the cause for which they suffer; and although they are children, God can deal with them as with *John the Baptist*; cause them in a moment to leap for Joy of Christ; or else can save them by his Grace, as he saveth other his elect infants, and thus comprehend them, though they cannot apprehend him; yea why may they, not only

78. Advice to Sufferers.

be saved, but in some sence be called *Martyrs* of Jesus Christ, and those that have suffered for Gods cause in the world? God comforted *Rachel* concerning her children that *Herod* murdered in the stead, and upon the account of Christ. He bids her refrain her self from tears, by this promise. *that her children should come again from the land of the enemy, from death.* And again saith he, *Thy children shall come again to their own border:* which I think if it be meant in a Gospel sence, must be to the heavenly inheritance, (compare *Jer. 31. 15.* with *Mat. 2. 18.*)

And methinks this should be mentioned, not only for her, and their sakes, but to comfort all those that either have had, or yet may have their children thus suffer for *righteousness*. None of these things (as shall be further shewed anon) happen without the determinate counsel of God. He has ordered the sufferings of little children as well as that of persons more in years. And 'tis easie to think that God can as well foresee which of his elect shall suffer by violent hands in their Infancy, as

Advice to Sufferers. 79

as which of them shall then die a natural death. He has Saints small in age as well as in esteem or otherwise: and sometimes the least member of the body suffereth violence, as well as the head or other chief parts.

And although I desire not to see these days again, yet methinks it will please me to see those little ones that thus have already suffered for Jesus, *to stand in their white Robes, with the elders of the people, before the throne to sing unto the Lamb.*

But to pass this, and to come to that, which is more directly intended to be spoken to, namely to shew you *who doth actively suffer for righteousness.* And,

1. 'Tis he that *chuseth* by his own will and consent to suffer for it. All suffering that can be called active suffering, must be by the consent of the will, and that is done, when a man shall have sin and suffering set before him, and shall chuse suffering rather than sin. *He chuse rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season: and again, They did*

80 Advice to Sufferers.

not accept of deliverance, that is, of base and unworthy terms, that they might obtain a better resurrection. (Heb. 11. 25. ver. 35.)

Indeed, no man can force a Christian to suffer as a Christian, without his own consent. All Christians are sufferers, of will, and consent. Hence 'tis said, *they must take up their cross*, by which *taking up*, an act of their will is intended. So again, *take my yoke upon you*, which also intends an act of the will. (*Mat. 10. 38. Chap. 16. 24. Chap. 11. 29.*)

This therefore, is the first thing that I would present you with. Not that an act of the will is enough to declare a man a sufferer for *righteousness*, it standing alone: for a man thorough the strength of delusion, and the power of an erroneous conscience, may be willing to suffer for the grossest opinions in the world. But I bring it to shew that actual suffering for *righteousness* must also be by the consent of the will, the mind of the man must be in it.

Secondly,

Advice to Sufferers. 81

Secondly, He that suffereth for righteousness thus, *must also have a good cause.* A good cause is that which is essential to suffering for righteousness. A good cause, what is that? Why verily, *It is the truth of God, either in the whole of it, as contained in the Scriptures of truth: or in the parts of it, as set before me to believe, or do, by any part of that holy word.* This may be called the *matter*, for which one suffereth: or, as it is called in another place, *the word of righteousness.* (Heb. 5. 13.) It may also be called the form of sound Doctrine, or the like. Because without this word, the Matter, and nature of Gods truths cannot be known. Pilate's question *what is truth?* will still abide a question, to those that have not, or regard not the word, the rule of righteousness. (John 18. 38.) See then that thy *cause* be good, thou that wouldest know what it is to suffer for righteousness; Step not an hairs breadth without the bounds of the word of truth; also take heed of misunderstanding, or of wringing out of its

E 5

place,

Place, any thing that is there. Let the words of the *upright*, stand upright, *warp* them not, to the end they may comply in shew with any crooked notion. And to prevent this, take these three words as a guide, in this matter, to thee. They shew men their sins, and how to close with a Saviour; they enjoin men to be holy and humble; they command men to submit themselves to authority. And what ever is cross to these, comes from ignorance of, or from a wresting the rule of righteousness out of its place.

But more particularly, the word of righteousness, (thy cause, within the bounds of which thou must keep, if thou wilt suffer for righteousness) is to be divided into two parts.

1. It containeth a revelation of *moral righteousness*.

2. It containeth a revelation of *evangelical righteousness*.

As for *moral righteousness*, men seldom suffer, *only*, for that. Because that is the righteousness of the World, and that, simply as such, that sets it self up in every mans conscience, and has

Advice to Sufferers. 83

has a testimony for it self, even in the light of nature. Besides, there is nothing that maketh head against that; but that which every man is ashamed, by words to plead for, and that is *immorality*. And this is that which Peter intends when he saith, *And if ye be followers of that which is good, who will harm you? (1 Pet. 3. 13.)* If ye be followers of *moral goodness*. (But if it should so happen, for the case is rare, that any man should make you sufferers because you love God, and do good to your neighbour, happy are ye. Though I do not think that the Apostles conclusion terminates there. But more of these things anon.) For let a man be a good neighbour, in morals: *let him feed the hungry, cloath the naked, give freely out of his purse to the poor, and do that which he would another should do to him: and stop there, and not meddle with the name of Christ, and he shall have but few enemies in the World. For 'tis not the Law, but Christ that is the stumbling block, and the rock of offence to men.* (Isaiah 8. 14, 15. Rom. 9. 31, 32, 33.)

Wherefore,

84 Advice to Sufferers.

Wherefore, there is in Gods word a revelation of another righteousness, a righteousness which is not so visible to, yea, and that suteth not so with, the reason of man as that moral righteousness doth: *Wherefore this righteousness makes men righteous in principle, and practise so, as is foreign to natural men.* Hence 'tis said to be *foolishness to them.* And again, *Its praise is not of men.* (Rom. 2. 29. 1 Cor. 2. 14.) This righteousness is also revealed in the Scriptures, but the blind cannot see it. *It is the work of the holy Ghost in the heart, and is therefore called the fruits of the spirit: and the grace, which in the bead and fulness of it, is only to be found in Christ.* (John 1. 16. Colos. 1. 19. 1 Tim. 1. 14.) This righteousness being planted in the heart, leads a man out by the word of God, to seek for another righteousness, as invisible to, and foreign from the natural man, as this. *And that righteousness is that which properly is the righteousness of Jesus Christ, a righteousness that standeth in his obedience to his Fathers Law, as he was considered a common, or publick person: a righteousness which he brought into the* World,

Advice to Sufferers. 85

World, not for himself, as considered in a private capacity, but for those that shall by faith venture themselves upon him, *to obtain by him life eternal.* Rom. 5. 19. Philip. 3. 7, 8, 9, 10.

Again, This closing by faith with this righteousness thus found in Christ, and being taken therewith, leads me yet to *another* righteousness, which is instituted worship, appointed by Christ, for all his followers to be conversant in; this worship is grounded on positive precepts, and so, on words of *righteousness*, called *Christs words*, *Christs sayings*, &c.

Now upon this bottom begins the difference betwixt the men of God, and the world.

For first, by this inward principle of righteousness we come to see, and say, that *men by nature* are not Christians: what priviledges soever they may account themselves partakers thereof. But whosoever is a Christian, of Gods making so, *is begotten and born of God, and made a new creature by the anointing received from the holy one.* (Jam. 1. 18. Joh. 3. 3. 5. 2 Cor. 5. 17, 18. Chap. 1. 21. 1 John 2. 20. 24. 27.)

Now

86 Advice to Sufferers.

Now this these carnal men cannot endure to hear of: because it quite excludes them *as such*, from a share in the kingdom of Heaven.

To this again, the Christian stands, and backs what he says by the word of God. *Then the game begins*, and the men of the World are thoughtful how they may remove such troublesome fellows out of the way. But because the Christians love their Neighbours, and will not let them thus easily die in their sins; therefore they contend with them, both by Reasonings, Writings, Sermons, and Books of Gospel Divinity: and stand to what they say. The world, again, are angry with these sayings, Sermons, and Books, for that by them they are concluded to be persons that are without repentance, and the hope of eternal life. Here again, the carnal World judges that these people are proud, self-will'd, Pragmatical, contentious, self conceited, and so insufferable People. The Christian yet goes on and stands to what he has asserted. Then the poor World, as at their last shift, begin to
turn,

Advice to Sufferers. 87

turn, and *over-turn* the Gospelmans sayings; perverting, forcing, stretching, and dilmembring of them: and so making of them speak what was never thought, much less intended by the believer.

Thus they served our Lord; for, not being able to down with his Doctrine, they began to pervert his words, and to make (as also they said afterwards of *Luthers*) some offensive, some erroneous, some Treasonable, and that both against God and *Cesar*, and so they hanged him up, hoping there to put an end to things.

But his is but the beginning of things: for the Christian man by the word of the Gospel goes further with his *censure*. For he also findeth fault with all that *this* man by the ability of nature, can do for the freeing himself from the law of sin and death. He condemns him by the word, because he is in a state of nature, and he condemneth also, what ever, while in that state, he doth, as that which by no means can please God. (*Rom. 14. 23. Heb. 1. 6.*) This now puts him more out, this is a taking of his gods away from him. This is to strip him

him

him of his raiment, such as it is, and to turn him naked into the presence of God. This I say purs him out, and out. These wild brained fellows, quoth he, are never content, they find fault with us *as to our state*: they find fault with us *as to our works*, our best works. They blame us because we are sinners, and they find fault with us, though we mend: they say, by nature, we are no Christians, and that our best doings will not make us such. What would they have us do. Thus therefore they renew their quarrel: But the Christians man cannot help it, unless he would see them go to Hell, and saying nothing. For the word of God doth as assuredly condemn mans *righteousness*, as it doth condemn mans sin, it condemneth not mans *righteousness* among men, for there it is good and profitable. (*Job 35. 6, 7, 8.*) But with God, to save the Soul, it is no better than filthy raggs. (*Isa. 64. 6.*)

Nor will this Christian man suffer these carnal ones to delude themselves with a change of terms; for the Devil who is the great manager of carnal man.

Advice to Sufferers. 89

men in things that concern their Souls, and in the plea that they make for themselves, will help them to *tricks* and *shifts* to evade the power of the word of God. Teaching them to call the beauties of Nature, Grace: and the *acts* of natural Powers, the *exercise* of the graces of the spirit. He will imbolden them also to call mans righteousness, *the righteousness of Christ, and that by which a sinner may be justified in the sight of God, from the Law.* These *tricks* the Christian sees, and being faithful to Gods truth, and desiring the Salvation of his neighbour, he laboureth to discover the *fallacy* of, and to propound better terms for this poor creature to imbrace, and venture his Soul upon: (which terms are warranted by the new Testament, a stranger to which the natural man is.) But I say, the things which the Christian presseth, being so foreign to nature, and lying so cross to mans best things, *are presently judged by the natural man, to be fables, or foolishness.* (1 Cor. 2. 14.) Wherefore here again, he takes another occasion to maintain his strife,
and

90 **Advice to Sufferers.**

and contention against the righteous man; Raising of slanders upon him, and laying things to his charge that he understandeth not: charging also his Doctrine with many grievous things. Namely, that he holseth that man was made to be damn'd, that mans righteousness is no better than sin, that a man had as good do ill, as well. That we may believe, and do what we list: that holiness pleaseth not God, and that sinning is the way to cause grace to abound. Besides, say they, he condemneth good motions, and all good beginnings of heart to God ward. He casteth away that good we have, and would have us to depend upon a justice to save us by, that we can by no means approve of.

And thus the quarrel is made yet wider between the men of the World, and the Christian man. But there is not a stop put here

For 'tis possible for the carnal man to be beaten out of all his arguments for himself and his own things, by the power and force of the word: and to be made to consent to what the Christi-
an

Advice to Sufferers. 91

an has said as to the notion of the truth (I must not speak this of all) But yet the breach doth still abide; for that yet there appears to be no more with the man, but only the *notion* of things. For though the *notion* of things are those that of God are made the means of conveying of grace into the heart: yet grace is not always with the notion of things: the word, oft-times, standeth in mans understanding alone, and remaineth there, as not *being* accompanied with such grace as can make it the power of God to salvation. Now when it is thus with the Soul, the danger is as great as ever, because, there is a *presumption* now begotten in the heart, that the man is in a saved condition. *A presumption*, I say, instead of faith, which *puffeth up*, instead of enabling the Soul after a godly manner to depend upon God for mercy through Christ. This is called the *word* of them that are *puffed up*; the word *only*, because not accompanied with saving grace. (1 Cor. 4. 19. Chap. 8. 1. 1 Thessal. 1. 5.)

This

92 Advice to Sufferers.

This the Christian also sees, and says it is too weak to conduct the Soul to Glory. And this indeed he says, because he would not that his neighbour should come short home. But neither can this be born, but here again, the natural man with his notion of things is offended: and takes pett against his Friend, because he tells him the truth, and would that he so should digest the truth, that it may prove unto him eternal life. Wherefore he now begins to fall out again, for as yet the enmity is not removed? He therefore counts him an unmercifull man, one that condemneth all to Hell but himself; and as to his singularity in things, those he counteth for dreams, for Enthusiasms, for Allegorical whimsies, vain Revelations, and the effects of an erroneous Judgment. For the Lord has put such darkness betwixt *Egypt* and *Israel*, as will not suffer them to come together. But this is not all.

For 'tis possible for these carnal men to be so much delighted in the notion of things, as to addict themselves to some

some kind of worship of Christ, whose notions of truth have by them been received. And because their love is yet but carnal, and because the flesh is swelling, and is pleased with pomp, and sumptuousness, therefore to shew how great an esteem such have for Christ, whom they are now about to worship: They will first, count his Testament, though good, a thing defective, and not of fulness sufficient to give in all particular things, direction how they should to their own content, perform their glorious Doctrine. For *here*, and *there*, and in *another* place, cry they, there is something wanting. Here, say they, is nothing said of those *places*, *vestures*, *gestures*, *shews*, and outward greatness that we think seemly to be found in, and with those that worship Jesus. Here wants sumptuous ceremonies, glorious ornaments, new fashion'd carriages, all which are necessary to adorn worship withall.

But now here again, the truly godly as he comes to see the evil of things: maketh his objections, and findeth fault, and counts them unprofitable
and

94 **Advice to Sufferers.**

and vain. (*Isa. 29. Mat. 15. Mark. 7.*)

But they again, (seeing the things they have made, are the very excellencies of humane invention, and things added as a supplement to make up what, and whereip as they think the man that was faithful over his own house as a Son was defective :) are resolved to stand upon their points, and not to budge an inch from the things that are so laudable, so necessary, so convenient and so comely: the things that have been judged good, by so many wise, learned, pious, holy, reverend, and good men. Nay, if this were all, the godly would make a good shift: But their zeal is so great for what they have invented, and their spirits so hot to make others couch and bend thereto, that none must be suffered to their power to live and breath, that refuseth to conform thereto. This has been proved too true, both in *France, Spain, Germany, Italy*, and other places: and upon this account it is that persecution has been kept alive so many hundred years in
some

some places against the Church of God. From what has been said as to these things, this I collect as the summ.

First, That man by nature, is in a state of wrath, and condemnation (*Ephes. 2. 1, 2, 3, 4. John 3. 18.*)

Secondly, that the natural man, by all his natural abilities, is not able to recover himself from this his condemned condition. (*John 6. 44. Ephes. 1. 19, 20.*)

Thirdly that a man may have right notions of Gospel things, that hath no grace in his heart, (*1 Cor. 13. 2, 3.*)

Fourthly, That to add human inventions to Christs institutions, and to make them of the same force and necessity, of the same authority and efficacy is nought, and not to be subjected to (*Isa. 29. 13. Mat. 15. 8, 9. Mark 7. 6, 7.*) So then, he that faith these things, faith true: for the Scriptures say the same. This then is a good cause to suffer for, if men will that I shall suffer for saying so: because it is that which is founded upon the word of God: and the word is the ground

ground and foundation of all true Doctrine. Let him then that believeth what is here discoursed, and that liveth soberly, and peaceably in this belief among his neighbours, stand by what he hath received, and rejoyce that he hath found the truth. And if any shall afflict or trouble him for holding of *these* things, they afflict or trouble him for holding to *good* things: and he suffereth at their hands because his *cause* is good.

And such an one may with boldness, as to this, make his appeal to the Bible, which is the foundation of his principles, and to God the author of that foundation, if what he holds, is not good.

He may say, "Lord, I have said, that man by nature, is in a state of condemnation, and they make me suffer for that.

"Lord, I have asserted that man by all his natural abilities is not able to recover himself from this his condemned state, and they make me suffer for that.

"Lord,

“ Lord, I have said that a natural
 “ man may have right notions of the
 “ Gospel, and yet be without the
 “ saving grace thereof, and they make
 “ me suffer for that.

“ Lord, I cannot consent that hu-
 “ man inventions and Doctrines of
 “ men, should be joyned with thy in-
 “ stitutions as matters of worship;
 “ and imposed upon my conscience as
 “ such, and they make me suffer for
 “ that.

“ Lord, I own the Government, pray
 “ for my Superiors, live quietly a-
 “ mong my Neighbours, give to all
 “ their dues, feed the hungry, cloath
 “ the naked, relieve the afflicted, and
 “ shew my self by my faith, and life,
 “ to be a true Christian man, and
 “ yet my neighbours will not let me
 “ alone. True, I cannot comply withal
 “ that some men would have me comply
 “ with: no more did *Daniel*, no more
 “ did *Paul*; and yet *Daniel* said, that he
 “ had to the King done no hurt, and *Paul*
 “ said, neither against the Law of the
 “ Jews, neither against the Temple, nor yet
 “ against *Cesar*, have I offended any
 “ thing

thing at all. (Dan. 6. 22. Acts 25. 8.)
 For he that keeps within the compass of Gods word, *hurts no man, gives just offence to no man.* Though he complyeth not with all that are modes, and ways of worship in the World: Nor can this appeal be judged injurious, if it be not attended with intercessions against them that hate us. But we will pass this, and come to a second thing.

Secondly, As he that suffereth for righteousness must have a *good cause*: So he that suffereth for righteousness *must have a good call.*

A man, though his *cause* be good, ought not by undue ways to run himself into suffering for it; nature teaches the contrary, and so doth the Law of God. Suffering for a truth ought to be *cautiously* took in hand, and as *warily* performed. I know that there are some men that are more concerned here than some: the Preacher of the word, is by Gods command made the more obnoxious man, *for he must come off with a wo, if he preaches not the Gospel.* (1 Cor. 9. 16.) He therefore, I say (doth
 (and

Advice to Sufferers. 99

and) ought more to expose himself than other Christians are called to do.

Yet it behoveth him also to beware, because that Christ has said to him, *Behold, I send you forth as Sheep, or Lambs, in the midst of Wolves, be ye therefore wise as Serpents, and harmless as Doves,* (Mat. 10. 16. Luk. 10.

3.) A man is not bound by the Law of his Lord, to put himself into the mouth of his enemy. Christ withdrew himself, *Paul escaped the Governours hands, by being let down in a basket over the wall of the city.* (2 Cor. 11. 32. 33.)

And Christ hath said, *If they persecute you in one City, flie ye to an other. If they will not let me preach here, I will take up my Bible and be gone.* Perhaps this is because I must preach in some other place. A Minister can quickly pack up, and carry his Religion with him, and offer what he knows of his God, to another people, (*Acts 13. 44, 45, 46, 47.*)

Nor should a Minister strive, I think, with the Magistrate for place, or time. But let him hearken to hear what God shall say by such opposition. *Perhaps the Magistrate must drive thee*

out of this place, because the Soul is in another place that is to be converted, or helped by thy Sermon to day. We must also in all things, shew our selves to be such as by our profession we would that men should believe we are, to wit, meek, gentle, not strivers, but take our Lord, and our Brethren the Prophets for our examples.

But I will not here presume to give instructions to Ministers; but will speak a few words in the general about what I think may be a sufficient call to a man to suffer for righteousness.

First, Every Christian man is bound by Gods word to hold to, or stand by his profession, his profession of Faith, and to joyn to that profession, an holy, godly life: because the Apostle and high Priest of his profession, is no less a one than Christ Jesus. (Heb. 3. 1. chap. 10. 23.) This by Christ himself is expressed thus, *Let your light so shine: No man lighteth a Candle to put it under a bushel: Let your loyns be girded about, and your lights burning. And Paul bids the Philippians hold forth the word of life.*

Advice to Sufferers. 101

life. (Mat. 5. 16. Luk. 12. 35. Philip. 2. 16.)

And more particularly, by all this, this is intended, that we should hide our faith in Christ from *no man*, but should rather make a discovery of it, by a life that will do so. For our profession thus managed is the *badge*, and the *Lords livery*, by which we are distinguished from other men. So then, if while I profess the truth of Christ, and so walk, as to make my profession of it more apparent: I be made a sufferer for it, my call is good, and I may be bold in God and in my profession. This *Peter* intends when he saith *But, and if ye suffer for righteousness sake, happy are ye, and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled. But sanctifie the Lord God in your hearts, and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: (1 Pet. 3. 14, 15.)* Here then is a call, not to meddle with the other, but to mind our own business, to walk in our Christian profession, and to adorn it with all good works, and

if any man will meddle with me, and ask me a reason of the hope that I have, to give it him with meekness and fear, whatever follows thereupon. (This Peter should have done himself there, where he denied his Master thrice.)

The reason is, for that Christianity is so harmless a thing, that he it never so openly professed, it hurts no man. I believe that Christ will save me; what hurt is this to my Neighbour? I love Christ because he will save me; what hurt is this to any? I will for this worship Christ as he has bid me; what hurt is this to any body? I will also tell my neighbours what a loving one my Christ is, and that he is willing to be good to them as he has been good to me and what hurt is this to the Governour of a Kingdom? But and if any man will afflict me for this, my cause is good, and also my call to stand full godly to my profession.

Secondly, There is sometimes a call to suffer for righteousness, even from the voice of necessity. That is, either when by my silence the truth must fall to the ground,

ground, or when by my striking, the
Souls of other men are in danger. This,
I say, is a call to suffer even by the voice
of necessity. The case may be when
Gods ways may be trodden un-
der foot. Yea, his Word, and Ways,
and Name, and People, and all. Thus
Goliath did do, for several days toge-
ther, (1 Sam. 17.) and vaunted in
his doing, and there was not a man,
no not in Israel that durst answer him
a word. And how was the spirit of
David stirred in him: and he would
put his life in his hand, and give this
man an answer, and he saw there was
reason for it. Necessity gave him a call
to there not a cause, saith he, (lies
bleeding upon the ground,) and no
man of heart, or spirit, to put a check
to the bold Blasphemer. I will go fight
with him: I will put my life in my hand,
if I die, I die.

Consider also what David did, when
the Law was gone out to forbid for thirty
days, pronouncing any God or man save the
King any liw. At that time also, how a
man of Israel prept him (Dan. 6. 10.)
How he walks about the streets,
crying

trying, who is on the Lords side who, &c. And Daniel answers, I am, by opening of his window, and praying as at other times, three times a day, with his face towards Jerusalem, verse 10. He heard this voice of necessity, and put his life in his hand, and complied with it to the hazzard of being torn in pieces by the Lyons.

Much like this was that of the three Children: for when that golden Image was set up, and worship commanded to be done unto it, not one that we read of, durst stand upright; when the time was come that bowing was the sign of worship. Only the three Children would not bow, 'twas necessary that some shou'd shew that there was a God in Heaven, and that divine worship was due alone to him. (Dan. 3, 10, 11, 12.)

But they run the hazzard of being turned so ashes, in a burning fiery furnace, for so doing. But necessity has a loud voice, and shrill in the ears of a tender conscience. This voice will awake jealousy, and kindle a burning fire within, for the name, and cause, and way,

way, and people of the God of Heaven.

Thirdly, there is sometimes a call to suffer for righteousness *by the voice of providence*. That is, when by providence I am cast for my profession into the hands of the enemies of God and his truth, then I am called to suffer for it what God shall please to let them lay upon me.

Only for the making of thy way more clear in this matter, I will deliver what I have to say with a caution or two.

1. Thou must take heed that thy call be good to this or that place, at which by providence thou art delivered up.

2. Thou must also take heed that when thou art there, thou busiest thy self in nothing but that that good is.

3. Thou must also take heed that thou stay there no longer, than while thou mayest do good or receive good there.

4. Thus far a man is in the way of his duty, and therefore may conclude that the providence of God under which

106. **Advice to Sufferers.**

which now he is, is such as has mercy, and salvation in the bowels of it, what soever is by it at the present brought upon him.

Christ Jesus our Lord, though his death was determined, and of absolute necessity, and that chiefly for which he came into the world, chose rather to be taken in the way of his duty than in any other way, or any where else. Wherefore when the hour was come, he takes with him some of his Disciples, and goeth into a garden, a solitary place to pray: which done, he sets his Disciples to watch, and falleth himself to prayer. So he prays once; he prays twice; he prays thrice: and he giveth also good doctrine to his Disciples. And now, behold, while he was here in the way of his duty, busying himself in prayer to God, and in giving of good instruction to his followers: upon him comes Judas, and a multitude with swords and staves, and weapons to take him. To which providence he in all meekness submits, for he knew that by it he had a call to suffer. (Mat. 26. 26, 37, 38.)

adidw

In

In this way also the Apostles were called to suffer, even while they were in the way of their duty. Yea, God bid them go into the Temple to preach, and there delivered them into the hands of their enemies. (Acts 4. 1, 2, 3. chap. 5. 10. 25, 26.)

Be we in the way of our duty, in the place, and about the work unto which we are called of God (whether that work be religious or civil,) we may without fear leave the issue of things to God, who only doth wonderful things. And he who lets not a Sparrow fall to the ground without his providence, will not suffer any hair of our head to perish, but by his order. (Luk. 12. 6, 7.) And since he has engaged us in his work (as he has if he has called us to it) we may expect that he will manage, and also bear us out therein: either so as by giving of us a good deliverance by way of restoration to our former liberty and service for him, or so as to carry us well out of this world to them that under the Altar are crying, how long, how long, and true. Nor shall we, when we come there, repent that we suffered
for

108. Advice to Sufferers.

for him here. *O how little do Saints in a suffering condition, think of the Robes, the Crowns, the Harps, and the Song that shall be given to them, and that they shall have when they come upon mount Zion.* (Revel. 6. 11. chap. 14. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.)

Fourthly, there is sometimes a call to suffer for righteousness. By an immediate, and powerful impulse of the spirit of God upon the heart. This I say is sometimes, and but sometimes: for this is not Gods ordinary way: nor are many of his Servants called after this manner to suffer for righteousness. *Moses* was called thus to suffer, when he went so often unto *Pharaoh* with the message of God in his mouth: and he endured, as seeing him who is invisible. (Heb. 11. 25, 26, 27.)

Paul was called thus to suffer, and he obeyed, and went, and performed that work according to the will of God. This kind of call, *Paul* calls a binding, or a being bound in the spirit, because the Holy Ghost had laid such a command upon him to do so, that he could not by any means get from under the power

power of it. And now, behold, saith he, I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem: not knowing the things that shall befall me there. (Acts 20. 22.) For he that is under this call, has, as I said, bonds laid upon his spirit: which carry him to the place where his testimony is to be born for God. Nor shall he, if he willingly submits, and goes, as Paul did, but have an extraordinary presence of God with him, as he. And see what a presence he had. For after the second assault was given him by the enemy, even the night following, the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem: so must thou bear witness also at Rome. (Acts 23. 11.) Thus God meeteth his people in their service for him when he calls them abroad to do great service, for him. The power of such a call as this I say is great, and men of ordinary spirits must needs give place thereto, and leave a man, thus bound, to the God that thus has bound him. All the help such can afford him is, to follow him with our prayers, not to judge him,
or

FRO GODLIER TO SUFFERERS.

or grieve him, or lay stumbling blocks before him. No they must not weep nor mourn for him so as to make him sorrowful. (See Acts 21. 11, 13, 14.)

His friends may suggest unto him what is like to attend his present errand, as Agabus did by the spirit, to Paul when he took his girdle and bound himself therewith, to shew him how his enemies should serve him whilst he went. Thus saith the holy Ghost, said he, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that shall be called Christ, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles. (Acts 21. 11.)

But if this call be indeed upon a man, all sorrow is turned into joy before him. For he is ready, not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. (Acts 21. 13.)

Instances also of later times might be given of a call extraordinary to suffer for righteousness. For many, in the first three hundred years persecution, when no body knew what they were, would boldly come up to the face of their enemies and tell what they

they were, and suffer for what they professed, the death: I remember also the Woman who when her Friends were gone before to suffer, how she came running, and panting after, for fear she should not come thither time enough to suffer for Jesus Christ.

But I will give you an instance of later times even in the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's Reign of an *Hertsfordshire* man that went as far as *Rome* to bear his testimony for God against the wickedness of that place. This man, when he was arrived there, and had told them wherefore he was come, they took and condemned him to death, to wit to be burned for an Heretick. Now he was to ride from the prison to the place of execution upon an Ass with his face to the beasts tail, and was to be stripped from the shoulders to the waste, that he might be tormented all the way he went, with burning torches continually thrust to his sides. But he nothing at all afraid, spake in his exhortation to the people to fly from their sin and Idolatry: he would also catch hold of the Tortures and

and put them to his sides, to shew how little he esteemed the worst that they could do. Also when he was come to the place of execution, he suffered there such cruelty, with so unconcern'd a mind, and with such burning zeal for Gods truth testified against them while he could speak: That, all amazed, his enemies cried, he could not have suffered as he did, but by the help of the Devil. His name I have now forgot, but you will find it with the story at large in the Third Volume of *Acts and Monuments* at the 1022. page. But we will pass this, and come to our second particular.

Namely, to shew when it may be said a man doth not only suffer for righteousness, but also for righteousness sake.

To suffer for *righteousness sake*, must be either with the intention of the persecutor, or else of the persecuted.

The persecutor, whatever the person suffering is, if he afflicteth this person, for a supposed good that he thinketh he hath, or professeth, he makes
him

him suffer for righteousness sake. So that in this sense, a man that hath no grace, may, not only suffer for righteousness, but also for righteousness sake. But this I intend not, because the Text is not concerned with it.

The thing therefore now intended to be spoken to, is this, namely, when a man may be said to suffer what he suffereth upon a religious account, of love to, or for the sake of that good that he finds in the truths of God, or because his heart is joyned, and espoused to the good of the truths that he professeth, not that there is any thing in any truth of God that is not good: but a man may profess truth, not for the sake of the goodnes that is in it, but upon a remote account, ~~judg~~ professed truth, not of love to the truth, but of love to the bag, and to the money that was put therein. Men may profess for a wife, for a trade, for friendship, or because profession is at such a time, or in such a place in fashion (I wish that there were no cause to say this.) Now there is not any of these that profess the truth,
for

for the truth's sake, that profess the
truth of love to it, nor shall they;
should they suffer as professors, never
so long, never so much, never so
graviously; be counted of God among
them that suffer for righteousness sake:
that is, of unfeigned love to righte-
ousness. Wherefore, that I may shew
you who may be said to suffer for righte-
ousness sake, I will propound and
speak to several things. 101 10 03 301

First then, He that suffereth in the
Apostles sense, for well doing, or for
righteousness sake, sets his face against
nothing but sin. *He resisteth unto blood,*
fighting against sin. It is the object
of his indignation, because 'tis an ene-
my to God, and to his righteous cause
in the World. (Heb. 12. 101) Sin, I
say, is that which such a man singlet
out as his opposite to his antagonist;
and that against which his heart is set.
'Tis a rare thing to suffer a right mind
to have my spirit in my suffering bent
only against Gods enemy, *1st*, *in*
Doctrine, *2d* *in* *Worship*, *3d* *in* *Life*,
4th *in* *Conversation*. Now he that
suffereth for righteousness sake, has
singled

Sublime to Sufferers. 115

singled out sin to pursue it to death long before he comes to the cross. 'Tis sin alas, and his hatred to it that have brought him into this condition. He fell out with sin at home, in his own house, in his own heart before he fell out with sin in the world, or with sin in publick worship. For he that can let sin go free and uncontrouled at home within, let him suffer while he will, he shall not suffer for righteousness sake. And the reason is, because a *righteous Soul*, as the Phrase is, (2 Pet. 2. 8.) has the greatest antipathy against that sin that is most ready to defile it, and that is, as David calls it, *ones own iniquity*, or the sin that dwelleth in ones own flesh. *I have kept me*, says he, *from mine iniquity, from mine own sin.* People that are afraid of fire, are concerned most with that that burneth in their own chimney, they have the most watchful eye against that that is like to burn down their own house first. He also that suffereth for *righteousness sake*, doth it also because he would not that sin should cleave to the worship of God, and

and indeed this is mostly the cause of the sufferings of the godly. They will not have to do with that worship that hath sinful traditions commixed with Gods appointments, because they know that God is jealous of his worship: and has given a strict charge that all things be done according to the pattern shewed to us in the Mount. He knows also that God will not be with that worship, and those worshipers that have not regard to worship by the rule of the Testament of Christ. He is also against the sin that is apt to cleave to himself while he standeth in the presence of God. *I will wash mine hands in innocency, so will I compass thine altar, O Lord.* This man also chuses to be in the practical parts of worship if possible, for he knows that to have to do about holy things sincerely, is the way to be at the remotest distance from sin. He chuses also to be with those holy Ones that are of the same mind with him against sin: For he knows that two are better than one, and that a threefold Cord is not easily broken. Wherefore look to
your

Advice to Sufferers. 117

your selves you that do, or may be called to suffer for Religion: if you bend not your selves against sin, if to be revenged of sin be not the cause of your suffering, you cannot be said to suffer for *righteousness sake*. Take heed therefore that some thing else be not an inducement to thee to suffer. A man may suffer to save what he has; There is credit also and an applaule: there is shame to conform, there is carnal stoutness of spirit: there is hatred of persecutors, and scorn to submit: there is fear of contempt, and of the reproach of the people, &c. These may be motives and arguments to a suffering state, and may really be the ground of a mans being in the Gaol; though he cries out in the meanwhile, of Popery, of Superstition, and Idolatry, and of the Errors that attend the common modes of the Religions of the World. I charge no man, as though I knew any such thing by any: But I suggest these things as things that are possible, and mention them because I would have sufferers have a care of themselves,

118 Advice to Sufferers.

themselves, and watch and pray, because no man can be upright here that is not holy, that cannot pray, and watch, and deny himself for the love that he has to righteousness. I said it before, and will say it again, 'tis a rare thing to be set in down-rightness of heart against sin.

Secondly, Is it for the sake of righteousness that thou sufferest. Then it is because thou wouldest have righteousness promoted, set up, and established in the world: also thou art afflicted at those advantages that iniquity gets upon men, upon things, and against thy self. I beheld, said David, the transgressors, and was grieved, because men kept not thy Law. (Psal. 119.) And again, these are they that mourn for the abominations that are done among men. (Ezek. 9.) There is a great deal of talk about Religion, a great deal of pleading for Religion, namely, as to the formalities of this and the other way. But to chuse to be Religions, that I might be possessed with holiness, and to chuse that Religion that is most apt to possess me with it, if I suffer for this, I suffer

for

Of the Buffets. 119

for righteousness sake? Wherefore
 say thus to thy Soul, thou shalt be like
 to suffer for righteousness sake? How dost
 with the most inward parts of my
 Soul, what is there? What designs, de-
 sires, and reachings out are there? Why
 do I pray? Why do I read? Why do
 I hear? Why do I haunt, and frequent
 places and ordinances appointed for
 worship? is it because I love ho-
 lineſſe? I would promote righteousness;
 because I love to see godlineſſe; shew it
 ſelf in others, and because I would feel
 more of the power of it in my ſelf?
 If ſo, and if thou ſufferſt for hypo-
 criſie, thou ſufferſt not only for right-
 eouſneſſe, but alſo for *hypocriſie* ſake.
 Dost thou thus praſtiſe, becauſe
 thou wouldeſt be taught to do out-
 ward acts of righteouſneſſe, and be-
 cauſe thou wouldeſt provoke others to
 do ſo too. Dost thou ſhew to others,
 how thou loveſt righteouſneſſe, by ta-
 king opportunities to do righteouſ-
 neſſe? How is it, doſt thou ſhew moſt
 mercy to thy Dog, or to thine enemy?
 to thy Swine, or to the poor? whoſe
 naked body haſt thou clothed? whoſe
 hungry

hungry belly hast thou fed? Hast thou taken delight in being *defrauded* and *beguiled*? hast thou willingly sat down by the loss with quietness, and been as if thou hadst not known, when thou hast been *wronged*, *defamed*, *abused*, and all because thou wast not willing that black mouthed men should vilifie and reproach Religion upon thy account? (1 Cor. 6. 7.)

He that loveth righteousness, will do thus, yea and do it as unto God, and of tenderness to the word of God which he professeth. And he that thinks to make seeing men believe that when he suffereth, he suffereth for righteousness sake, and yet is void in his life of moral goodness, and that has no heart to suffer and bear, and put up, and pass by injuries in his conversation among his enemies at home, is deceived.

There are some Scriptures that are as if they were out of date among some professors, specially such as call for actual holiness and acts of self denial for God, but it will be found, at the day of judgment that they only are

Advice to Sufferers. 121

are the peculiar people that are zealous of good works, (Tit. 2. 14.) God help us, 'tis hard now to perswade professors to come up to *negative* holiness, that is, to leave undone that which is bad; and yet this of it self comes far short of ones being found in practical goodness.

But this is the man that suffereth, (when he suffereth) for righteousness sake, that makes it his business by all lawful means, according to the capacity that God has put him in, to promote, set up, and establish righteousness in the World: I say this is the man that suffereth for righteousness sake, that suffereth for so doing: and I am sure that a life that is moral, when joyned to the profession of the faith of the things that are of the spirit of God, is *absolutely* necessary to the promoting of righteousness in the World. Hence Peter tells them that suffer for righteousness sake, that they must have a good conscience, a good conscience towards God, towards men, towards friends, towards enemies. (1 Pet. 3. 14, 15, 16. Acts 24. 16. chap. 23. 1.) They
G must

must have a good conscience in all things, being willing, ready, desirous to live honestly, godly and righteously in this world, or else they cannot, though they may suffer for the best doctrine under heaven, suffer for righteousness sake. (*Ezek. 13. 18.*) Wherefore,

Thirdly, Is it for righteousness sake that thou sufferest? then thy *design* is the *ruin* of sin, this depends upon what was said before: for he that strives against sin, that seeks to promote righteousness, he *designs* the *ruin* of sin. Be not, said Paul to the suffering Romans, overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. (*Rom. 12. 21.*) To overcome evil with good, is an hard task. To rail it down, to cry it down, to pray Kings, and Parliaments, and men in authority to put it down, this is easier than to use my endeavour to overcome it with good, with doing of good, as I said before. And sin must be overcome with good at home, before thy good can get forth of doors to overcome evil abroad.

Abraham

Abbate to Sufferers. 123

Abraham overcame evil with good, when he quieted the discontent of *Lot*, and his Herdsmen, with allowing of them to feed their Cattel in the best of what God had given him. (*Gen.* 13. 7, 8.)

David overcame evil with good, when he saved the life of his bloody enemy that was fallen into his hand: also when he grieved that any hurt should come to them that sought nothing so much as his destruction. They rewarded me, saith he, evil for good, to the spoiling of my Soul. But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth. I humbled my Soul with fasting, I behaved my self, as if he had been my Friend or Brother. I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth for his Mother. This is to overcome evil with good, (*Psal.* 35. 11, 12, 13, 14.)

Job saith concerning his enemy, that he did not rejoyce when evil found him, (neither have I, said he, suffered my mouth to sin, by wishing a curse to his Soul.) he means he did the quite contrary, and so overcame evil with good. (*Job* 31. 29, 30.)

Elisha overcame evil with good, when he received the men that came for his life, and had them where they might feast, and comfort them, and sent them home in peace to their master. (2 Kings 6. 19, 20, 21, 22, 23.)

The new Testament also is full of this, both in exhortations and examples.

In exhortations, where 'tis said, Resist not evil, that is, with evil, but overcome evil with good. (PROV. 24. 29.) But whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him awain. Give to him that asketh thee: and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away. Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you. That you may be the children of your Father which is in heaven, for he makes his Sun to rise on the evil, and on the good, on the just, and on the unjust. Bless them that persecute you, bless and curse not. Not rendering evil for evil, nor reviling for reviling, but

con-

contrariwise, blessing, knowing that you are thereunto called, that you should inherit a blessing. (Mat. 5. 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48. Rom. 12. 14. 1 Pet. 3. 9, 10, 11.) This is righteousness, these are righteous courses. And as these are preceptively pre-
pounded, so they were as practically followed by them that were eminently Godly in the Primitive Church.

We are fools for Christ sake, said Paul, we are despised, we are hungry, thirsty, naked and buffeted. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it: being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the off-scouring of all things unto this day. (1 Cor. 4. 10, 11, 12, 13.)

This is overcoming of evil with good, and he that has chosen to himself that Religion that teaches these things, and that loves that Religion because it so teacheth him. if he suffereth for it, he suffereth for righteousness sake.

Fourthly, He that suffereth for righteousness sake, will carry righteousness whithersoever he goes. Neither the enemy, nor thy sufferings shall be able

126 Advice to Sufferers.

to take righteousness from thee. Righteousness must be thy chamber-mate, thy bed-companion, thy walking-mate: It is that without which thou wilt be so *uncomf*, as if thou couldst not live, (*Psal.* 26. 1---11. *Psal.* 25. 21.)

Paul in his sufferings would have righteousness with him, for it must be as it were his *armour-bearer*: yea his very armour it self. (*2 Cor.* 6. 7.)

'Tis an excellent saying of *Job*, I put righteousness on, and it clothed me, my judgement was as a Robe and a Diadem. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame; I was a father to the poor, &c. (*Job* 29. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15.)

Princes, said *David*, did sit and speak against me, but thy servant did meditate in thy statutes. (*Psal.* 119. 23.)

A man that loves righteousness, doth as *Abraham* did with his *Sarah*, carry it every where with him, though he goes, because of that, in danger of his life. Righteousness! it is the only intimate that a Christian has: It is that by which he takes his measures, that
with

with which he consults, with respect to what he doth, or is to do in the World. *Thy testimonies, said David, are my delight: and my counsellors. (The men of my council, in the margent.) (Psal. 119. 24.)*

David! he was the man of affliction; the suffering man in his day: but in all places where he came, he had righteousness, the Law and Godly practice with him. It was his Counsellor, as he was a man, a Saint, a King. I dare say, for that man that suffers righteousness to be rent away from him by the violence and rage of men, and that casts it away, as *David* did *Sauls* Armour, that he may secure himself; he has no great love for righteousness, nor to the Cross for righteousness sake.

My righteousness I hold fast, said Job, and I will not let it go, my heart shall not reproach me as long as I live. (Job 27.6.) What? part with righteousness! A righteous Lord! A righteous word! A righteous profession! A righteous life! to sleep in a whole skin: the Lord forbid it me, and all that he has counted worthy to be called by his
G 4 Name.

128 Advice to Sufferers.

Name. Let us carry it with us from the Bed to the Cross, and then it shall carry us from thence to the Crown. Let it be our companion to Prison and death, then shall we shew that we are lovers of righteousness, and that we chuse to suffer for righteousness sake.

Fifthly, Dost thou suffer for righteousness sake, why then, thy righteousness is not diminished, but rather increased by thy sufferings. Righteousness thriveth best in affliction; the more afflicted, the more holy man; the more persecuted, the more shining man, (*Acts 6. 15.*)

The prison is the furnace, thy graces are the Silver and the Gold, wherefore as the Silver and the Gold are refined by the fire, and so made more to shew their native brightness. So the Christian that hath, and that loveth righteousness, and that suffereth for it's sake, is by his sufferings refined and made more righteous, and made more Christian, more godly. (*Zech. 13. 9.*)

Some indeed when they come there, prove Lead, Iron, Tin, and at the best, but the dross of Silver; and so are

are fit for nothing, but there to be left and consumed, and to bear the *badg*, if ever they come from thence, of reprobate Silver from the mouth and sentence of their neighbours. (*Ezek.* 22. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22. *Jer.* 6. 28, 29, 30.) But when I, says Job, am tried, I shall come forth as gold. (*Job* 23. 10.)

When Saul had cast one javelin at David, it made him walk wisely in all his ways. But when he added to his first fury, plots to take away his life, then David behaved himself yet more wisely. (*1 Sam.* 18. 10. to 30. verse.)

The hotter the rage and fury of men are against righteous ways, the more those that love righteousness, grow therein. For they are concerned for it, not to hide it, but to make it spangle; not to extinguish it, but to greasen it, and to shew the excellency of it in all it's features, and in all it's comely proportion. Now such an one will make straight steps for his feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way. (*Heb.* 12. 13.) Now he shews to all men what faith is, by
G. 5
charity,

130 Advice to Sufferers.

charity, by self-denial, by meekness, by gentleness, by long-suffering, by patience, by love to enemies, and by doing good to them that hate us: now he walketh upon his high places. Yea, will not now admit that so slovenly a conversation should come within his doors, as did use to haunt his house in former times. Now 'tis *Christmas*, now 'tis suffering time, now we must keep *holy day every day*.

The reason is, for that a man when he suffereth for Christ, is set upon an *Hill*, upon a *Stage*, as in a *Theater*, to play a part for God in the World. And you know when men are to play their parts upon a Stage, they count themselves, if possible, more bound to circumspection; and *that* for the credit of their *Master*, the credit of their *Art*, and the credit of *themselves*. For then the eyes of every body are fixed, *they gape and stare upon them*. (Ps. 22. 17.) and a trip here, is as bad as a fall in another place. Also now God himself looks on. Yea, he laugheth, as being pleased to see a good behaviour attending the tryal of the innocent.

1. He

Advice to Sufferers. 131

1. He that suffereth for righteousness sake suffereth *for* his goodness, and he is now to labour by works and ways to convince the world that he suffereth *as* such an one.

2. He that suffereth for righteousness sake has many that are weak to strengthen by his sweet carriages under the Cross, wherefore he had need to exceed in vertue.

3. He also is by well-doing to put to silence the ignorance of foolish men, he had need be curious, and circumspect in all his actions.

4. He is to come in, and to be a Judge, and to condemn, by his faith and patience in his sufferings, the World (with his Lord and fellows) at the appearing of Jesus Christ: he had need be holy himself. (1 Cor. 6. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Heb. 11. 7. 2 Thessal. 1. 5, 6: 1 Pet. 4. 3, 4, 5.) This therefore is the fit sign of suffering for righteousness sake.

Sixthly, He that suffereth, not only for righteousness, but also for righteousness sake, will not exchange his cause, though for it in a Gaol, for all the ease and

and pleasure in the world. They that suffered for *righteousness sake* of old, were *tempted* before they were sawn asunder. (*Heb. 11.*) *Tempted*, that is, *allured*, to come out of their present sufferings, and leave their faith and profession, in *irons*, behind them. Tempted with promises of promotion, of ease, of friendship, of favour with men. As the Devil said to Christ, so persecutors of old did use to make great promises to sufferers, *if they would fall down and worship*. But this is *alone* as if they should say, Butcher, make away with your righteousness and a good conscience, and you shall find the friendship of the World. For there is no way to kill a mans righteousness but by his own consent. This *Jabs* wife knew full well, hence *she tempted him to lay violent hands upon his own integrity*. (*Job 2. 9.*)

The Devil, nor men of the World can kill thy righteousness or love to it, but by thy own hand; or separate that and thee asunder, without thine own act. Nor will he that doth indeed suffer for
the

the sake of it, or of love he bears thereto, be tempted to exchange it: for the good of all the World.

'Tis a sad sight to see a man that has been suffering for righteousness, restored to his former estate, while the righteousness for which he suffered, remains under locks and irons, and is exposed to the scorn, contempt, reproach of the World, and trodden under the foot of men. 'Tis better, said Paul, *for me to dye, than that any man should make my glorying void.* And it had been a hundred times better for that man, if he had never known the way of righteousness, than after he has known it, to turn from the holy Commandment delivered unto him.

The *striving* is, in persecution, for righteousness: to wit, whether it shall be set up, or pull'd down. The sufferer, he is for setting up, and the persecutors are for pulling down. Thus they strive for the mastery. Now if a man stands by his righteousness, and holds fast his good profession, then is righteousness set up: nor can it *long* be pulled down. Hence, *so long*

134 Advice to Sufferers.

a man is said to *overcome*. And overcome he doth, though he be killed for his profession. But if he starts back, gives place, submits, recants, or denyeth any longer to own that good thing that he professed, and exposed himself to suffering for: then he betrays his *cause*, his *profession*, his *conscience* his *righteousness*, his *Soul*, and all: for he has delivered up his profession to be murdered before his face: *And is fallen down before the wicked, like a corrupt fountain, and a troubled spring,* (Prov. 25.26.) But this, I hope, will not hede that loveth righteousness, and that suffereth for righteousness sake. I do not say but that a man may slip here, with Peter, Origen, Hierom, Crammer, Baynham, Orms, and other good folk: but be he one of the *right* kind a lover of righteousness indeed, he will return, and take revenge upon himself in a godly way, for so ungodly a fact.

Seventhly, He that suffereth not only for righteousness, but also for righteousness sake, is not so wedded to his own notions, as to flight or overlook the good that is in his neighbour. But righteousness.

ness he loves, where-ever he finds it, though it be in him that *smiteth him.* (Psal. 141. 5.) Yea, he will own and acknowledge it for the only thing that is of beauty and glory in the World. *With the excellent in the earth is all such a mans delight.* Wherefore I put a difference betwixt suffering for an opinion and suffering for righteousness, as I put a difference betwixt suffering for righteousness, and suffering for righteousness sake.

If righteousness, if the stamp of God, if Divine authority, is not found upon that thing which I hold, let men never suffer for it under the notion of righteousness. If *Superstition*, if *Idolatry*, if *derogation from the wisdom of Christ*, and the authority and perfection of his word, be not found in, nor joined to that thing that I follow in worship, let me never open my mouth against it. I had rather fall in with, and be an associate of a righteous man, that has no true grace, than with a professor that has no righteousness. 'Tis said of the young man, though he went away from

136 Advice to Sufferers.

from Christ, that he looked upon him and loved him; (Mar. 10. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21.) But 'tis not said that ever he loved Judas. I know that the righteousness, for which a good man suffereth, is not then imbraced of the world, for that at such a time it is under a cloud. But yet there is righteousness also in the World, and where ever I see it, 'tis of an high esteem with me. David acknowledged some of his enemies to be more righteous than he acknowledged some of his servants to be. (2 Sam. 4. 9, 10, 11 Chap. 3. 3, 32, 33, 34, 35.) 'Tis a brave thing to have righteousness, as righteousness, to be the top piece in mine affections. The reason why Christ was anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows, was, because he loved righteousness, and hated iniquity more than they. (Heb. 1. 9.) Love to righteousness flows from golden graces, and is that, and that only that can make a man capable of suffering (in our sense) for righteousness sake.

Eighthly, He that suffereth not only for righteousness, but also for righteousness.

righteousness sake, will take care that his sufferings be so managed with graciousness of words and actions, that it may live when he is dead: Yea, and it will please him too, if righteousness flourishes, though by his loss.

Hence it is that Paul said, he rejoiced in his suffering, namely, because others got good thereby. And that he said, Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoyce with you all. (Colos. 1. 24. Philip. 2. 16. 17.) But why rejoyce in this? Why, because though his sufferings were to the distressing of his flesh, yet they were to the refreshing, comfort, and stability of others. This was it also that made him jostle with the false brethren among the Churches: to wit, that the truth of the Gospel might continue with them. (Gal. 2. 4, 5.)

When a man shall run the hazzard of the ruin of what he has, and is, for righteousness, for the good and benefit of the Church of God, that man, (he managing himself by the rule) if he suffers for so doing, suffers not only for righteousness, but also for righteousness sake.

138 Advice to Sufferers.

sake. I endure all things, said Paul, for the elects sake that they may also obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. (2 Tim. 2. 9, 10.)

Here was love, You will say, to persons; and I will say also, to things; to all the righteousnesses of God that are revealed in the world, that all the elect might enjoy them to their eternal comfort, and glory by Christ Jesus. For whether we be afflicted, says he, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which ye also suffer, or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation. (2 Cor. 1. 5, 6.)

The end of a man, and his design, if that be to promote righteousness, he using lawful means to accomplish it, is greatly accepted of God by Christ; and it is a sign he is a lover of righteousness, and that if he suffereth for so doing, he suffereth not for well doing, only, as to matter of fact: but also for his love to the good thing done, and for its sake.

I have now done with that first head that was to be spoken to, as touching
the

the Law and Testament: which we have said was to be understood of the will of God spoken of in the Text. Let them that suffer according to the will of God, that is, according to his Law and Testament. Now we have shewed what it is to suffer according to that, we come to another thing, namely that by *will of God*, we also understand, *His order and designment.* For the will of God is *active*, to dispose of his people, as well as *preceptive*, to shew unto us our duty. He then that suffers for righteousness sake; as he suffers for that which is good as to the *matter* of it, and as he suffers for that which is good, after that *manner* as becomes that truth for which he suffereth: So he that thus suffereth, *suffereth by the order and designment of God.* That then is the next thing that is to be spoken to, Namely,

God is the great orderer of the battel that is managed in the World against Antichrist: hence that battel is called, *The battel of that great day of God Almighty.* (Revel. 16. 14.)

It is not what enemies will, nor what they are resolved upon, but what
 God

God will, and what God appoints, that shall be done. This Doctrine Christ teacheth when he saith, *Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God. But even the very hairs of your heads are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.* (Luk. 12. 6, 7.) He speaks in the verses before of killing, and bids them that they should not be afraid for that. *Fear not them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you, whom ye shall fear; Fear him who after he hath killed, hath power to cast into Hell. Yea, I say unto you, fear him.* Then he leads them to the consideration of this, that the will of God governs, and disposes of his, to suffering: as well as declares to them for what, and how they should suffer, saying, *Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, &c.*

Also in *Isaiah* the 8. at the 9. and 10. and in *Isaiah* the 51. at the 12. and 13. You have in sum the same thing inserted again.

But

But we will not stay upon proof, but will proceed to demonstration here-

Pharaoh said he would, ay, that he would, but he could not touch so much as a thread or a ragg of *Israel*, because the will of God was in that thing contrary to him.

Saul said that he would have *David*, and to that end would search for him among the thousands of *Judah*: but *David* was designed for another purpose, and therefore *Saul* must go without him. (1 Sam. 23. 22, &c.)

Rabshakeh said that he was come from *Affria* to *Jerusalem*, to make *Judah* eat their own dung, and drink their own piss. But God said he should not shoot an arrow there. And it came to pass as God had said. (2 King. 18. 2. Chron. 28. 18. 36. and 37. chap.)

Jeremiah's and *Barach's* enemies would have killed them, but they could not, for God hid them.

How many times had the *Jews* a mind to have destroyed *Jesus Christ*; but they could not touch an hair of his head until his hour was come.

Those

142 **Advice to Sufferers.**

Those also that bound themselves in a curse, that they would neither eat nor drink, until they had killed Paul, were forced to be forsworn, for the will of God was not, that Paul should die as yet. (*Acts 23. at the 12. verse.*)

This therefore should be well considered of Gods Church, in the cloudy and dark day. *All his saints are in thy hand.* (*Deut. 33. 3.*) It is not the way of God to let the enemies of Gods Church do what they will: no, the Devil, himself *can devour but whom he may.* (*1 Pet. 5.*)

And, as no enemy can bring suffering upon a man when the will of God is otherwise: so no man can save himself out of their hands, when God will deliver him up for his glory. It remaineth then that we be not much afraid of men, nor yet be foolishly bold, but that we wait upon our God in the way of righteousness, and the use of those means which his providence offereth to us for our safety; and that we conclude that our whole dispose, as to liberty or suffering, lie in the will of God: and that

Advice to Sufferers. 143

that we shall, or shall not suffer even as it pleaseth him. For,

First, God has appointed *who* shall suffer: suffering comes not by chance, or by the will of man, but by the will and appointment of God. *Let no man, said Paul, be moved by these afflictions: for you your selves know that we are appointed thereunto. (1 Thess. 3. 3.)*

We are apt to forget God when affliction comes, and to think it a strange thing that those that fear God should suffer indeed. (1 Pet. 4. 12.) But we should not, for we suffer *by the will and appointment of God*. Hence they under the Altar were bid to rest for a while, even until their fellow servants also, and their brethren that should be killed: (mark that, *should be killed, as they were,*) *should be fulfilled. (Revel. 6. 11.)* Wherefore suffering for righteousness, and for righteousness sake is by the will of God. God has appointed *who* shall suffer. Thats the first.

Secondly, as God has appointed *who* shall suffer: so he has appointed *when* they shall suffer for his truth in the World. Sufferings for such and such

a man are timed, as to *when*, he shall be tried for his faith. Hence, when Paul was afraid at Corinth that the Heathens would fall about his ears, the Lord spake to him by night in a vision, saying, Be not afraid Paul, but speak, and hold not thy peace, for I am with thee, and no man shall set upon thee, to hurt thee. (Acts 18. 9, 10.) His time of suffering was not yet come, there. It is also said concerning Jesus Christ, that even then when they sought to take him, no man laid his hands on him, for his hour was not yet come. (John 7. 30.) The times then, and the seasons, even for the sufferings of the people of God, are not in the hands of their enemies, but in the hand of God, as David said, *my times are in thy hand.* By the will of God then it is, that such shall suffer at, but not *until* that time. But,

Thirdly, as God has appointed *who* and *when*, so he has appointed *where* this, that, or the other good man shall suffer. Moses and Elias, when they appeared on the holy Mount, told Jesus of the sufferings which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. Jerusalem was the

Advice to Sufferers. 145

the place assigned for Christ to suffer at, also there must the *whole* of his sufferings be accomplished. (Luke 9. 30, 31.) The Saints are sprinkled by the hand of God here and there, as Salt is sprinkled upon meat to keep it from stinking. And as they are thus sprinkled that they may season the earth : so accordingly, where they must suffer is also appointed for the better conforming of the truth. Christ said, *It could not be that a Prophet should perish out of Jerusalem.* (Luk. 13. 33.) But why could it not be that they should perish other where? Were there no enemies but in Jerusalem? were there no good men but at Jerusalem? No, no, that was not the reason. The reason was for that God had appointed that they should suffer there. So then, *who, when, and where,* is at the will of God, and they accordingly are ordered by that will.

Fourthly, As God has appointed *who, when, and where* : so he has also appointed *what kind of sufferings*, this or that Saint shall undergo at *this place* and at *such a time*. God said that he

H

would

146 Advice to Sufferers?

would shew *Paul* (before hand) how great things he should suffer for his sake. (Acts 9. 16.) And 'tis said that *Christ* did signifie to *Peter* before hand, by what death he should glorifie God. *Joh* 21. 19.

When *Herod* had beheaded *John Baptist*, and when the *Jews* had crucified *Christ*, 'tis said, that they had but fulfilled what was written of them. (Mark 9. 13. Acts 13. 29.)

Our sufferings as to the nature of them; are all writ down in Gods Book: and though the writing seem as unknown characters to us, yet God understands them very well. Some of them they shall kill and crucifie, and some of them they shall scourge in their Synagogues, and persecute them from city to city. (Mat. 23. 34.) Shall God (think you) say some of them, they shall serve thus, and some of them, they shall do so too: and yet not allot, which some to this, and which to that, and which to the other tryal?

Doubtless our sufferings fall by the will of God unto us, as they fell of old upon the people of *Jerusalem*. 'Twas appointed by God who of them should die

die of hunger, who with the sword, who should go into captivity, and who should be eaten up of beasts. (Jer. 15. 3.) So is the case here, Namely, as God has appointed who, when, where and the like, so he has also what manner of sufferings this or that good man shall undergo for his Name. Let it then be concluded that hitherto it appears that the sufferings of Saints are ordered and disposed by the will of God. But,

Fifthly, As all this is determined by the will of God, so it is also appointed, for what truth this or that Saint shall suffer this or that kind of affliction. Every Saint has his course, his work, and his testimony, as is allotted him, of God. (Mark. 13. 34.) John had a course, a testimony to fulfil for God, and so had holy Paul. (Acts 13. 25. 2 Tim. 4. 6, 7.) and so has every Saint: also he that is to suffer, has his truth appointed him to suffer for. Christ had a truth peculiar to himself, to bear witness to, in a way of suffering. John had a truth peculiar to himself to bear witness to, in a way of suffering. Stephen had
H 2 also

148. **Advice to Sufferers.**

also a truth divers from them both, to which he bare a *holy testimony, and for which he bravely died.* (Mark. 14. 61, 62. chap. 6. 17, 18. Acts 7. 51. 52, 53.)

If you read the Book of *Acts* and *Monuments*, you may see a goodly variety as to this, and yet in all, a curious harmony. Some are there said to suffer for the Godhead, some for the manhood, some for the ordinances of Christ, and some laid down their lives for the brethren. And thus far we see that he that suffers for righteousness sake, suffers in this sence according to the will of God.

Sixthly, As it is appointed (who, when, where, what kind, and) for what truth by the will of God, this and that Saint should suffer: so also it is appointed by *whose hand*, this or that man shall suffer for this or that truth.

It was appointed that *Moses* and *Israel* should suffer by the hand of *Pharaoh*. And for this very purpose, saith God, *have I raised thee up that is to be a persecutor, and to reap the fruits thereof.* (Exod. 9. 13--13.) It was also determined that *Christ* should suffer by the

Advice to Sufferers. 149

the hand of *Herod* and *Pontius Pilate*, For of a truth, said they, against thy holy child *Jesus*, both *Herod* and *Pontius Pilate* with the *Gentiles*, and the children of *Israel* were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand, and thy counsel determined before to be done. (Acts 4.27.)

These are great instances, from which we may gather how all these things are ordered from thence down hitherto. For if a *sparrow* falls not to the ground without God, she shall not be killed without God: not by, he knows not who. And if a Christian man is better than many *sparrows*: It follows, that God concerns himself more with, for, and about him, than with, for, or about many *sparrows*.

It follows therefore in right reason, that as the person *who*, is appointed to be the sufferer; so the persons *who*, are appointed to be the rod and sword thereby to afflict withal.

Thus far therefore the will of God is it, that ordereth and disposeth of us, and of our sufferings.

Seventhly, As all these pass thorough the hand of God, and come not to us,

150 Advice to Sufferers.

but by his will: So *how long* is also as really determined, as any of them all. 'Tis not in man, but God, to set the time *how long*: the rod of the wicked shall rest upon the lot of the righteous.

Abraham must be informed of this.

Abraham, says God, know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them, and they shall afflict them four hundred years. (Gen. 15. 13.) So the thralldom of

Israel in Babylon was not only in the general appointed, but the time prefixed, *how long*. (Jer. 25. 11. 12. chap. 29. 10.)

The time of the Beasts Reign, and of the witnesses walking in sackcloth are punctually fixed, and that beyond which they cannot go. (Revel. 11, 12, 13. chapters.)

I know these are generals, and respect the Church in the *bulk* of it, and not particular persons. But, as was hinted afore, we must argue from the greater to the lesser, that is from *four hundred years*, to *ten days*; from *ten days*, to *three*: and so from the Church in general to each particular member, and to the time and nature of their sufferings.

Advice to Sufferers. 151

ings. (*Revel. 2. 10. Hof. 6. 2. Acts 23. 11.*)

And thus in a word or two I have finished the first two parts of the Text, and shewed you, what there is in *Peter's* counsel and advice, and shewed you also, to whom his advice is given: in which last, as you see, I have shewed you both what the will of God is, and what to suffer according to it. And particularly I have in a few words, handled this last; to shew you that our sufferings are *ordered* and *disposed* by him, that you might always when you come into trouble for his Name, not stagger, nor be at a loss: but be stayed, composed and settled in your minds, and say, *the will of the Lord be done.* (*Acts 21. 14.*) I will also say unto you this by the way, that the will of God doth greatly work, even to order and dispose of the spirits of Christians, in order to a willingness, disposedness, readiness, and resignation of ourselves to the mind of God. For with respect to *this*, were those words last recited, spoken. *Paul* saw that he had a call to go up to *Jerusalem* there to bear his testimony for Christ, and

habeat

H 4

his

his Gospel, but those unto whom he made known his purpose, entreated him with much earnestness not to go up thither, for that as they believed, it would indanger his life. But he answereth, *what mean ye to weep and to break my heart? for I am ready, not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.* And when he would not be perswaded, says Luke, *we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done.*

From what has been thus discoursed, many things will follow, as first, that the *rod* as well as the *child* is Gods; *persecutors* as well as the *persecuted* are his, and he has his own designs upon both. He has raised them up, and he has ordered them for himself, and for that work that he has for them to do. Hence *Habakkuk* speaking of the Churches enemies, saith: *Thou hast ordained them for judgement, O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction.* (Hab. 1. 12.) And therefore they are in other places called the *rod* of Gods anger, his *staff*, his *hand*, his *sword*. (Isa. 10. 5. Psal. 17. 13, 14.)

Indeed

Indeed to be thus disposed of, is a *sad Lot*; the lot is not fallen to them in pleasant places, they have not the goodly heritage, but the judgments of God are a great deep. *The thing formed may not say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus?*

To be appointed, to be ordained, to be established to be a persecutor, and a troubler of Gods Church! O tremendous judgment! O amazing anger!

Three things the people of God should learn from hence.

First, *Learn to pity*, and bewail the condition of the enemy; I know thou canst not alter the counsel of God, appointed they are, established they are for their work, and do it they must and shall. But yet it becomes them that see their state, and that their day is coming, to pity and bewail their condition, yea, and to pray for them too. For who knows whether it is determined that they should remain implacable to the end, as *Hnod*: or whether they may thorough grace obtain repentance for

H 5

their

154 Addre to Sufferers.

their doings, with *Saul*. And, I say again, if thy prayer should have a casting hand in the conversion of any of them, it would be sweet to thy thoughts, when the *scene* is over.

Secondly, Never grudge them their present advantages. *Fret not thy self because of evil men, neither be thou envious at the workers of iniquity.* (Prov. 23. 19.) Fret not, though they spoil thy resting-place. 'Tis God that has bidden them do it, to try thy faith, and patience thereby. Wish them no ill with what they get of thine, 'tis their wages for their work, and it will appear to them ere long that they have earned it dearly. Their time is to rejoyce but as in a moment, in what thus is gotten by them: and then they, not repenting, are to perish for ever, *like their own dung.* (Job 20. 5, 6, 7.)

Poor man, thou that hast thy time to be afflicted by them, that thy golden graces may shine the more, thou art in the fire, and they blow the bellows: but wouldest thou change places with them? wouldest thou sit upon their

Advice to Sufferers. 155

their place of ease? dost thou desire to be with them? (Prov. 24. 1.) O rest thy self contented, in thy patience possess thy Soul, and pity and bewail them in the condition in which they are.

Thirdly, Bless God that thy lot did fall on the other side, Namely, to be one that should know the truth, profess it, suffer for it, and have grace to bear thee up there under, to Gods glory, and thy eternal comfort. *This honour have not all his Saints; all are not counted worthy thou to suffer shame for his Name.* Do this I say though they get all, and leave thee nothing but the shirt on thy back, the skin on thy bones, or an hole in the ground to be put in. (Heb. 11. 23, 24, 25, 26.)

Fourthly, Labour to be patient under this mighty hand of God, and be not *hasty* to say, when will the rod be laid aside, mind thou thy duty, which is to let patience have its perfect work, and bear the indignation of the Lord, because thou hast sinned against him, until he please to awake, to arise and to execute judgment for thee. (Mich. 7.)

But

156 Advice to Sufferers.

But to pass this.

Secondly, Are things thus ordered? then this should teach us that *there is a cause*. The rod is not gathered without a cause; the rod is fore determined, because the sin of Gods people is foreseen, and, oft-times, the nature of the sin, and the anger of the Father, is seen in the fashion of the rod. The rod of my anger, saith God. A bitter and *hasty* Nation must be brought against Jerusalem, an enemy fierce and cruel must be brought against the land of Israel. Their sins called for such a rod, for their iniquities were grievous. (Habak. 1. 6.)

This should teach us with all earnestness to be sorry for our sins, and to do what we can to prevent these things, by falling upon our face in a way of prayer before God. If we would shorten such days, when they come upon us, let us be lovers of righteousness, and get more of the righteousness of faith, and of compliance with the whole will of God, into our hearts. Then I say, the days shall be shortened, or no fare as well, because the more harm; less

less and innocent we are, and suffer, the greater will our wages, our reward and glory be, when pay-day shall come: and what if we wait a little for that?

These things are sent, to better Gods people, and to make them white, to refine them as Silver, and to purge them as gold: and to cause that they that bear some fruit, may bring forth more: we are afflicted, that we may grow.

(John 15. 1, 2.) 'Tis also the will of God that they that go to heaven should go thither hardly or with difficulty. *The righteous shall scarcely be saved.* That is, they shall, but yet with great difficulty, that it may be the sweeter.

Now that which makes the way to Heaven, so strait, so narrow, so hard, is the rod, the sword, the persecutor, that lies in the way, that marks where our haunt is, that mars our path, digs a pit, and that sets a net, a snare for us in the way. (1 Sam. 23. 22. Job 30. 12, 13, 14. Psal. 9. 25. Psal. 31. 4. Psal. 35. 7. Psal. 119. 110. Psal. 140. 5. Psal. 142. 3.)

This

138 Advice to Sufferers.

This, I say, is that which puts us to it, but it is to try, as I said, our graces, and to make Heaven the sweeter to us. To come frightened, and hard pursued, thither, will make the safety there, the more with exceeding gladness to be imbraced. And I say, get thy heart yet more possessed with the power of Godliness; that the love of righteousness may be yet more with thee. For this blessedness, this happiness, he shall be sure of, that suffereth for righteousness sake.

Thirdly, since the rod is Gods, as well as the child: let us not look upon our troubles as if they came from, and were managed only by Hell. 'Tis true, a persecutor has a black mark upon him, but yet the Scriptures say, that all the ways of the persecutor, are Gods. (*Dan. 5. 23.*) Wherefore as we should, so again, we should not be afraid of men: we should be afraid of them, because they will hurt us; but we should not be afraid of them, as if they were let loose to do to us, and with us what they will. Gods bridle is upon them, Gods hook is in their nose:

nose : yea, and God has determined the bounds of their rage, and if he lets them drive his Church into the sea of troubles, it shall be but *up to the neck*, and so far it may go, and not be drowned. (2 King. 19.28. Isa. 37.29. Isa. 8.7, 8.) I say the Lord has hold of them, orders them ; nor do they at any time come out against his people but by his licence and commission how far to go, and where to stop.

And now for two or three objections.

1. Object. *But may we not flee in a time of persecution? your pressing upon us, that persecution is ordered, and managed by God, makes us afraid to flee.*

Ans. First, having regard to what was said afore about a call to suffer ; Thou mayest do in this, even is it is in thy heart. If it is in thy heart to fly, fly : if it be in thy heart to stand, stand. Any thing but a denial of the truth. He that flies, has warrant to do so ; he that stands, has warrant to do so. Yea, the same man may both flee, and stand, as the call, and working of God with his heart may be.

Moses

Moses fled, Moses stood; David fled, David stood; Jeremiah fled, Jeremiah stood; Christ withdrew himself, Christ stood; Paul fled, Paul stood. (*Exo.* 2. 15. *Heb.* 11. 27. & *Sam.* 19. 12. chap. 24. 8. *Jer.* 37. 11, 12. chap. 38. 17. *Luke* 9. 10. *Joh.* 18. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. 2 *Cor.* 11. 32, 33. *Acts* 20. 22, 23.)

There are therefore few rules in this case. The man himself is best able to judge concerning his present strength, and what weight this or that argument has upon his heart to stand or flee. I should be loth to impose upon any man in these things: only if thou fliest, take two or three cautions with thee.

1. Do not fly out of a slavish fear, but rather because flying is an ordinance of God, opening a door for the escape of some, which door is opened by Gods providence, and the escape countenanced by Gods word. (*Matt.* 10. 23.)

2. When thou art fled, do as much good as thou canst in all quarters where thou comest, for therefore the door was opened to thee, and thou bid to make thy escape. (*Acts* 8. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.)

3. Do

3. Do not think thy self secure when thou art fled, 'twas providence that opened the door, and the word that did bid thee escape: but *whither*, and wherefore, that thou knowest not yet. *Uriah* the Prophet fled into *Egypt*, because there dwelt men that were to take him, that he might be brought again to *Jerusalem* to die there. (*Jer.* 26. 21.)

4. Shouldest thou fly from where thou art, and be taken in another place. The most that can be made of it; thy taking the opportunity to fly, as was propounded at first, can be but this, thou wast willing to commit thy self to God in the way of his providence, as other good men have done, and thy being now apprehended has made thy call clear to suffer here or there, the which before thou wert in the dark about.

5. If therefore, when thou hast fled, thou art taken, be not offended at *God*, or *man*: not at *God*, for thou art his servant, thy life and thy all are his: not at *man*, for he is but Gods rod, and is ordained, in this, to do thee good.

162 Advice to Sufferers.

good. Hast thou escaped? laugh: art thou taken? laugh: I mean be pleased which way soever things shall go, for that the scales are still in Gods hand.

6. But fly not, in flying, from Religion; fly not, in flying, for the sake of a trade: fly not, in flying, that thou mayest have ease for the flesh: this is wicked, and will yield neither peace nor profit to thy Soul, neither now, nor at death, nor at the day of judgment.

2. Obj. But if I fly, some will blame me: what must I do now?

Ans. And so may others if thou standest: fly not therefore, as was said afore, out of a slavish fear; stand not, of a bravado. Do what thou dost in the fear of God, guiding thy self by his word, and providence: and as for this or that mans judgment, refer thy case to the judgment of God.

3. Obj. But if I be taken and suffer, my cause is like to be clothed with scandals, slanders, reproaches, and all manner of false, and evil speakings: what must I do?

Ans. Saul charged David with Rebellion. (1 Sam. 22. 8. 13.)

Amos

Advice to Sufferers. 163

Amos was charged with conspiring against the King. (*Amos* 7. 10.) *Daniel* was charged with despising the King: and so also were the three children. (*Dan.* 6. 13 chap. 3. 12.) *Jesus Christ* himself was accused of perverting the nation, of forbidding to give tribute to *Cesar*, and of saying that himself was *Christ a King*. (*Luk.* 23. 2.) These things therefore have been. But

1. Canst thou, after a due examination of thy self, say that as to these things thou art innocent, and clear? I say, will thy conscience justify thee here. Hast thou made it thy business to give unto God the things that are Gods, and unto *Cesar*, the things that are his, according as God has commanded? If so, matter not what men shall say, nor with what lies and reproaches they slander thee, but for these things count thy self happy. Blessed are you when men shall revile you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely (lying) for my name sake, (saith Christ.) Rejoyce, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you.
(*Mat.*

164 Advice to Sufferers.

(*Mat. 5. 11, 12.*) Comfort thy self therefore in the innocency of thy Soul, and say, I am counted a *Rebel*, and yet am *Loyal*; I am counted a *deceiver*, and yet am *true*. (*1 Sam. 24. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. 2 Cor. 6. 8.*) Also refer thy cause to the day of judgment: for if thou canst rejoyce at the thoughts that thou shalt be cleared of all slanders and evil speakings then; *that* will bear up thy heart as to what thou maiest suffer now. The answer of a good conscience will carry a man thorough Hell to Heaven. Count these slanders part of thy sufferings, and those for which God will give thee a reward, because thou art innocent, and for that they are laid upon thee for thy professions sake. *But if thou be guilty, look to thy self, I am no comforter of such.*

I come now to speak to the third and last part of the Text, Namely, of the good effect that will certainly follow to those that after a due manner shall take the advice afore given. *Let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their Souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator.*

Two

Two things from the last clause of the Text lie yet before us. And they are they by which will be shown, what good effect will follow to those that suffer according to the will of God, and that commit their Souls to his keeping.

1. Such will find him to themselves, [a Creator.]

2. They will find him a [faithful] Creator. Let them commit the keeping of their Souls to him, as unto a faithful Creator.

In this phrase [a faithful Creator] behold the wisdom of the holy Ghost, how fitly, and to the purpose he speaketh.

King, is a great Title, and God is sometimes called a King; but he is not set forth by this Title here, but by the Title of a Creator: for it is not always in the power of a King, to succour and relieve his Subjects, that are suffering for his Crown and Dignity.

Father, is a sweet Title, a Title that carrieth in it an intimation of a great deal of bowels and compassion, and God is often set forth also by this Title in the holy Scriptures. But so he is not

166 Advice to Sufferers.

not here, but rather as a *Creator*. For a Father, a compassionate Father, cannot always help, succour or relieve his Children, though he knows they are under affliction! Oh but a *Creator* can. Wherefore I say, he is set forth here under the Title of a *Creator*.

First, a *Creator*! nothing can die under a *Creator's* hands. A *Creator* can sustain all. A *Creator* can, as a *Creator*, do what he pleases. *The Lord, the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, nor is weary.* (Isa. 40. 28.)

The cause of God, for which his people suffer, had been dead and buried a thousand years ago, had it not been in the hand of a *Creator*. The people that have stood by his cause, had been out of both as to persons, name, and remembrance, had they not been in the hand of a *Creator*.

Who could have hoped when *Israel* was going in, even into the mouth of the red Sea, that ever his cause, or that people should have revived again. A huge host of the *Egyptians* were behind them, and nothing but death before and

on every hand of them; but they lived, they flourished, they out-lived their enemies, for they were in the hand of a *Creator*.

Who could have hoped that *Israel* should have returned again from the land, from the hand, and from under the *Tyranny of the King of Babylon*? They could not deliver themselves from going thither; they could not preserve themselves from being diminished when they came there, their power was gone, they were in captivity, their distance from home was far, their enemies possess their Land, their City of defence was ruined, and their houses burned down to the ground: and yet they come home again, there is nothing impossible to a *Creator*.

Who could have thought, that the three Children could have lived in a fiery furnace, that *Daniel* could have been safe among the Lyons, that *Jonah* could have come home to his Countrey, when he was in the Whales belly, or that our Lord should have risen again from the dead: but what is impossible to a *Creator*?

This

This therefore is a rare consideration for those to let their hearts be acquainted with, *that suffer according to the will of God, and that have committed the keeping of their Souls to him in well doing.* They have a Creator to maintain and uphold their cause, a Creator to oppose its opposers. And hence it is said, *all that burden themselves with Jerusalem, shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it.* (Zech. 12.3.)

Secondly, *A Creator!* A Creator can, not only support a dying cause, but also fainting spirits. For, *as he fainteth not, nor is he weary, so he gives power to the faint, and to those that have no might, he increaseth strength.* (Isa. 40.29.) He is the God of the spirits of all flesh, and has the life of the spirit of his people in his own hand. *Spirits have their being from him, he is the Father of Spirits.* Spirits are made strong by him, nor can any crush that spirit, that *God the Creator will uphold.*

Is it not a thing amazing to see *one* poor inconsiderable man, in a Spirit of faith and patience, overcome all the threatnings, cruelties, afflictions, and sorrows that a whole World can lay upon him? None can quail him, none can crush him, none can bend down his spirit. None can make him to forsake what he has received of God a commandment to hold fast. His holy, harmless, and profitable notions, because they are *spiced* with grace, yield to him more comfort, joy and peace, and do kindle in his Soul so goodly a fire of love to, and zeal for God, that all the waters of the World shall never be able to quench.

Ay, say some, that's because he is *headstrong*, *obstinate*, and one that will *bear no reason*. No, say I, But it is because his Spirit is in the hand, under the conduct, and preservation of a *Creator*. A *Creator* can make spirits, uphold spirits, and make one Spirit stronger to stand, than are all the Spirits of the World to cast down. To stand, I say, in a way of patient enduring, in well doing, against all that Hell can do to suppress.

I

Thirdly,

Thirdly, A Creator! A Creator can bring down the Spirits that oppose, and make them weak and unstable as water. The Lord, the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not nor is weary. There is no searching of his understanding. He gives power to the faint, and to those that have no might he increaseth strength, now mark *even the youth shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall.* A Creator can dash the Spirits of the enemies with fear. God can put them in fear and make them know that they are men and not God, and that their Horses are flesh, and not spirit. When the enemy came to take Jesus Christ, their spirits fainted, their hearts died in them, *they went backwards, and fell to the ground.* They had hard work to strengthen their spirits to a sufficiency to boldness and courage, though they brought Halberts, and Staves, and Swords, and weapons with them, to take a naked man. (John 18. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.)

And

And although this is that which is not so visible to the World as some other things are, yet I believe that God treads down the Spirits of men in a day when they afflict his people, oftner than we are aware of, or than they are willing to confess. (How was the hostile Spirit of *Esau* trod down of God, when he came out to meet his poor naked brother, with no less than four hundred armed men? He fainted before his Brother, and instead of killing, kiss him, (*Gen. 33.*) How was the bloody Spirit of *Saul* trod down, when *David* met him at the mouth of the Cave, and also at the hill *Hachilah*? (*1 Sam. 24. 62.*—) God is a Creator, and as a Creator is a Spirit maker, a Spirit reviver, a Spirit destroyer. *He can destroy body and Soul in hell.* (*Luk. 12.*)

Fourthly, A Creator! As a Creator he is, over all Arts, Inventions and Crafts of men that are set on work to destroy Gods people, whether they be Soldiers, excellent Orators, or any other whatsoever; we will single out one, the Smith, that roaring fellow,

who with his coles and his Bellows makes a continual noise.

I have created the Smith, saith God, that bloweth the coals in the fire, that bringeth forth an instrument for his work, and I have created the master to destroy. (Isa. 45. 16.)

The Smith, what is he? I answer, an Idol-maker, a promoter of false worship, and one that makes Instruments of cruelty, therewith to help to suppress the true. (Chap. 41. 7. Chap. 44. the 12. Chap. 46. & chap. 54. 17.)

I have created the Smith, saith God, that bloweth the coals in the fire. The Idol inventor, the Idol-maker, the supporter of Idol worship, *he is my creature*, saith God, to teach that he has power to reach him, and to command his Sword to approach him at his pleasure; notwithstanding his roaring with his Bellows, and his coals in the fire. So then, he cannot do what he will in the fire, nor with his Idol when he has made it, the instrument also, that he makes for the defence of his Idol, and for the suppressing of Gods true worship, shall not

not do the thing for the which^e is designed by him. And so the very next verse saith. *No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn, this is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me,* saith the Lord. (ver. 17.) And the Text saith moreover; *I have created the waster to destroy.* The waster, what's that? why the Smith makes an Idol, and God has made the rust; the Smith makes a Sword, and God has made the rust. The rust eats them up, the moth shall eat them up, the fire shall devour them. The wicked, saith the Psalmist, have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy: and to slay such as are upright in conversation; their sword shall enter into their own heart, and their bow shall be broken. (Psal. 37. 14, 15.)

All this can God do, because he is a Creator, and none but God can do it. Wherefore by this peculiar Title of Creator, the Apostle prepareth support for suffering Saints, and also

shews what a good conclusion is like to be made with them that suffer for righteousness sake, according to his will, and that commits the keeping of their Souls to him in well doing as unto a faithful Creator.

Fifthly, A Creator! a Creator can make such provision for a suffering people in all respects, as shall answer all their wants. Have they lost their peace with the World? have they no more peace with this World? Why, a Creator can make, create peace, can create peace, peace; Peace with God, and peace with his conscience, and that's better than all the peace that can be found else where in the World. (Isa. 57. 19.)

Have they lost a good frame of heart? do they want a right frame of spirit? Why, though this is to be had no where in the World, yet a Creator can help them to it. (Psal. 51. 10.)

Have they lost their spiritual defence, do they lie too open to their spiritual foes? Why, this a Creator can help. And the Lord shall create upon every dwelling

Advice to Sufferers. 175

dwelling place of Mount Sion, and upon all her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all her glory shall be a defence. (Isa. 4, 5, 6.)

This is the work of the Spirit: for though the Spirit it self be *uncreate*, yet all the holy works of it in the heart, are verily works of *Creation*. Our new man is a *Creation*; our graces are a *Creation*; our joys, and comforts, are a *Creation*. (2 Cor. 5. 17, 18. Ephes. 4. 24. Isa. 65. 17, 18, 19.)

Now a *Creation* none can destroy but a *Creator*; wherefore here is comfort. But again, God hath created us in *Christ Jesus*, thats another thing. the *Sun* is created in the *Heavens*; the *Stars* are created in the *Heavens*; the *Moon* is created in the *Heavens*. Who can reach them, touch them, destroy them, but the *Creator*? Why, this is the case of the Saint, because he has to do with a *Creator*, he is fastned to *Christ*: yea, is in him by an act of *Creation*. (Eph. 2. 10.) So that unless *Christ* and the creation of the holy Ghost can be destroyed, he is safe that is

I 4

suffering

176 Advice to Sufferers.

suffering according to the will of God, and that hath committed the keeping of his Soul to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

And this I would have you consider moreover ; the man that suffereth according to the will of God, committeth not such a Soul to this *Creator*, as dwells in carnal men ; a naked Soul, a graceless Soul, a Soul that has nothing in it but sin ; but he commits a converted Soul, a regenerate Soul, a Soul adorned, beautified, and sanctified, with the Jewels, and bracelets, ear-rings and perfumes of the blessed spirit of grace. And I say again, this is the work of a *Creator*, and a *Creator* can maintain it in its gallantry, and he will do so, but he will put forth acts of creating power for it every day.

Sixthly, a *Creator* ! he that can create, can turn and alter any thing, to what himself would have it. He that made the seven Stars and Orion, turneth the shadow of death into the morning. He can make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. (Amos 5. 8. Isa. 41. 18.)

Our

Our most afflicted and desolate conditions he can make as a little haven unto us; he can make us sing in the wilderness, and give us our vineyards from thence. (Hol. 2. 14, 15.) He can make Paul sing in the stocks, and good Rowland Taylor dance, as he goeth to the burning stake.

Gaols, and mocks, and scourgings, and floggs, and imprisonments, and hunger, and nakedness, and Peril, and Sword, and Dens, and Caves, and Rocks, and Mountains; God can so sweeten with the Honey of his word, and make so famous for situation, by the glory of his presence, and so rich and fruitful by the communications of the holy Ghost, and so easy by the spreading of his feathers over us: that we shall not be able to say, that in all the world a more commodious place, or comfortable condition can be found: some have known this, and have been rather ready to covet to be here, than to shun, and fly from it as a most unsavoury condition.

All these things, I say, God doth as a Creator. He hath created Antipathies,

178 Advice to Sufferers.

and he can make *Antipathies* close, and have favour one for another. The *Lion* and the *Calf*, the *Wolf* and the *Lamb*, the little *Boy* and the *Cockatrice's* den he can reconcile, and make to be at agreement. So, sufferings and the Saint, the Prison and the Saint; losses, crosses, and afflictions, and the Saint: he can make to lie down sweetly together.

Seventhly, A *Creator*: A *Creator* can make up all that thou hast or shalt lose for the sake of thy profession by the hands of the Children of men, be they Friends, Relations, a World, life, or what you can conceive of.

1. Hast thou lost thy *Friends* for the sake of thy profession? Is the whole World set against thee for thy love to God, to Christ, his cause, and righteousness? Why, a *Creator* can make up all. Here therefore is the advantage that he hath that suffereth for righteousness sake. *Jonathan* the very Son of bloody *Saul*, when *David* had lost the help of all his own Relations, he must fall in with him, stick to him, and love him as he loved his own Soul. (1 Sam. 18. 1, 2, 3.) *Obadiah*, *Abishai* Steward,

Steward, when the Saints were driven even under ground by the rage of *Jezabel* the Queen, he is appointed of God to feed them in Caves, and holes of the Earth. Yea, the very *Raven* complied with the will of a *Creator* to bring the Prophet bread, and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh at night. (1 *King*, 18. 13. chap. 17. 6.) When *Jeremiah* the Prophet was rejected of all, yea, the Church that then was, could not help him; he was cast into the Dungeon, and sunk to a great depth there in the mire: God the *Creator*, who ruleth the spirits of all men, stirred up the heart of *Ebed-melech* the *Ethiopian* both to petition for his liberty, and to put him out of the Dungeon by the help of thirty men. (*Jer*, 38. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13.) These now, as Christ says, were both *Fathers, Mothers, Brothers, Sisters,* and as a *Loving Wife, or Child.* (*Mat*. 19. 29.)

2. Hast thou for the sake of thy faith, and profession thereof, lost thy part in the World? why, a *Creator* can make thee houses, as he did for the
Midwives

180 Advice to Sufferers.

Midwives of Egypt, and can build thee a fire house as he did for David his Servant, who ventured all for the love that they had to the fear of God and his way. (Exo. 1. 20, 21. 2 Sam. 7.) David was thrust out of Sauls house, and driven from his own, and God opened the heart of Achish the King of Gath, to receive him, and to give him Ziklag. David, when under the tyranny of Saul, knew not what to do with his Father and his Mother who were persecuted for his sake, but a Creator inclined the heart of the King of Moab to receive them to house and harbor. (1 Sam. 27. 5, 6. Chap. 22. 3, 4.)

3. Is thy life at stake, is that like to go for thy profession, for thy harmless profession of the Gospel? Why, God the Creator is Lord of life, and to God the Lord belong the issues from death. So then, he can, if he will, hold thy breath in thy nostrils, in spite of all the World, or if he shall suffer them to take away this for his glory, he can give thee another ten times as good, for thy comfort. He that loveth his life shall lose it, and he that

Advice to Sufferers. 181

that hateth his life in this world, shall keep it unto life eternal. (Joh. 12. 25.)

4. Is thy body to be disfigured, dismembred, starved, hanged or burned for the faith and profession of the Gospel? Why, a Creator can either prevent it, or suffering it, can restore it the very same to thee again, with great and manifold advantage. He that made thee to be what thou now art: can make thee to be what thou never yet wast. It doth not yet appear what we shall be, further; than only by general words.

(1 John 3. 2. Philip 3. 21.)

Eighthly, A Creator! Peter sets him before us here as a Creator, because he would have us live upon him as such: as well as upon his grace, love, and mercy. In *Jobs* day this was bewailed, that none, or but a few said, where is God my maker that giveth songs in the night. (Job 35. 10.)

Creator, as was hinted before, is one of Gods peculiar Titles. It is not given to him above five or six times in all the Book of God; and usually, when given him, it is either to shew his greatness, or else to convince us, that

of duty we ought to depend upon him : and not to faint, if he be on our side, for, or under any adversity, according as we are bidden in the Text: *Let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their Soul to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator.*

Shall God display his glory before us, under the character, and Title of a Creator? and shall we yet fear man? shall he do this to us, when we are under a suffering condition, and that on purpose that we might commit our Souls to him in well doing? and be quiet; and shall we take no notice of this? Who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the Son of man that shall be made as grass? and forgettest the Lord thy maker that hath stretched forth the Heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth &c. (Isa. 51. 12, 13.)

Had God concealed himself, as to his being a Creator: yet since he presenteth himself unto us by his word under so many excellent Titles, as are given to no other God besides: methinks it should

should make us bold in our God: but when, for our relief, he shall add to all other, that he verily is a *Creator*, this should make us rest in hope indeed.

Every Nation will have confidence for their own Gods, though but Gods that are made with hands, though but the work of the *Smith* and *Carpenter*: And shall not we trust in the name of the *Lord our God*, who is not only a God, but a *Creator* and *former of all things*? (Mich. 4. 5.) Consequently the only living, and true God, and one that alone can sustain us.

We therefore are to be greatly blamed, if we overlook the ground, such ground of support and comfort as presenteth it self unto us under the Title of a *Creator*: But then most of all, if when we have heard, believed and known that our God is such, we shall yet be afraid of a man that shall die, and forget the *Lord our Maker*.

We, I say, have heard, seen, known and believed, that our God is the *Creator*. *The heavens declare his glory, and the*

184 Advice to Sufferers.

the firmament sheweth his handy work: and thus he has shewed unto us his eternal power and Godhead. (Rom. 1. 20.)

Behold then, thou fearful worm, Jacob, the Heavens, the Sun, the Moon, the Stars: behold the Earth, the Sea, the Air, the fire, and Vapors: Behold all living things from *Leviathan* and *Behemoth*, to the least that creepeth in the Earth and Waters. Yea, behold thy self, thy Soul, thy Body, thy fashion, thy building, and consider; thy God hath made even all these things, and hath given to thee this being: yea, and all this also, he made of that which doth not appear. (Heb. 11. 3.)

This is that which thou art called to the consideration of by *Peter*, in the Text; when he letteth fall from his apostolical meditation, that thy God is the *Creator*: and commandeth that thou in thy suffering for him according to his will, shouldest commit the keeping of thy Soul to him as unto a faithful Creator.

He that has the art thus to do, and that can do it in his straights, shall never be trodden down: His God, his
faith;

Advice to Sufferers. 185

faith; his faith, his God, are able to make him stand. For such a man will thus conclude, that since the Creator of all is with him; what, but *Creatures*, are there to be against him. So then, *what is the Axe, that it should boast it self against him that keweth therewith? or the Saw, that it should magnifie it self against him that shaketh it? as if the rod should shake it self against him that lifeth it up; or as if the staff should lift up it self, as if it were no wood.* (Iia. 10. 15.)

Read also the 40th of *Isaiah*, from the 12 to the last verse, and then speak, if God as Creator is not a sure confidence to all the ends of the earth that trust in, and wait upon him.

As Creator he hath formed and upholdeth all things, yea his hands have formed the crooked Serpent, wherefore he also is at his bay: and thou hast made the Dragon in the Sea: And therefore it follows that he can cut and wound him, and give him for meat to the Fowls, and to the beasts inheriting the wilderness, if he will seek to swallow up and destroy the Church and People of God. (Job 26. 13. Ps. 74. 13, 14. Isa. 51. 9. Ezek. 29. 3, 4.)

Ninthly,

186 Advice to Sufferers.

Ninthly, A Creator! is God the God unto whom they that suffer according to his will, are to commit the keeping of their Sou's, the Creator? and doth he take charge of them as a Creator? Then this should teach us to be far off from being dismayed, as the heathens are, at his tokens: for our God, the Lord, is the true God, the living God, the King of eternity. (Jer. 10. 1, 2, 10.)

We should tremblingly glory and rejoyce when we see him in the World, though upon those that are the most terrible of his dispensations. God the Creator will sometimes mount himself and ride thorough the earth in such Majesty and glory, that he will make all to stand in the Tent doors to behold him. O how he rode in his chariots of Salvation, when he went to save his people out of the land of Egypt; how he shook the Nations. Then his glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. His brightness was as the light: he had horns coming out of his hand, and there was the hiding of his power. Before him went the pestilence, and

and turning coals went forth at his feet: He stood, and measured the earth: he beheld, and drove asunder the nations, the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow: his way is everlasting. Then saith the Prophet, I saw the Tents of Cushan in affliction: the Curtains in the land of Midian did tremble. Was the Lord displeased against the rivers? was thine anger against the rivers? was thy wrath against the Sea, that thou didst ride upon thy horses, and thy chariots of salvation? (Habbak. 3.)

So David. The earth shook and trembled, saith he: the foundations also of the hills moved, and were shaken, because he was wroth. There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured, coals were kindled by it. He bowed the heavens also, and came down: and darkness was under his feet. And he rode upon a Cherub, and did flee, he did flee upon the wings of the wind. He made darkness his secret place: his pavilion round about him were dark waters, and thick clouds of the skies. At the brightness that was before him, his thick clouds passed, hailstones and coals of fire. The Lord also thundered

thundred in the heavens: and the Highest gave his voice, hail-stones and con's of fire. Yea, he sent out his arrows, and scattered them, and he shot out lightning, and discomfired them. Then the chanel's of waters were seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered: at thy rebuke, O Lord, at the blast of the breath of thy nostrils. (Psal. 18. from verse 7. to verse 15.)

These are glorious things, though making dispensations. God is worthy to be seen in his dispensations as well as in his word, though the nations tremble at his presence. O that thou wouldst rend the heavens, that thou wouldst come down, saith the Prophet, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence. (Isa. 64. 1, 2.)

We know God, and he is our God, our own God, of whom, or of what should we be afraid? (Psal. 46.) When God roars out of Zion, and utters his voice from Jerusalem, when the heavens and the earth do shake, the Lord shall be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel. (Joel 3. 16.)

Every man stayeth up, or letteth his spirit fall according to what he knoweth concerning

concerning the nature of a thing. He that knows the Sea, knows the Waves will toss themselves; he that knows a Lyon, will not much wonder to see his Paw, or to hear the voice of his roaring. And shall we that know our God, be stricken with a pannick fear, when he cometh out of his holy place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity? We should stand like those that are next to Angels, and tell the blind world who it is that is thus mounted upon his steed, and that hath the clouds for the dust of his feet, and that thus rideth upon the wings of the wind: we should say unto them, this God is our God for ever and ever, and he shall be our guide even unto death.

Our God! the Creator! He can turn men to destruction, and say, Return ye children of men. When our God shews himself, 'tis worth the while to see the sight, though it costs us all that we have, to behold it.

Some men will bless and admire every rascally *Jugler*, that can but make again that which they only seem to marr, or do something that seems
to

to out-go reason: yea, though they make thundrings and noise in the place where they are, as though the Devil himself were there.

Shall Saints then, like slaves, be afraid of their God the Creator, of their own God, when he renteth the heavens, and comes down? when God comes into the world to do great things, he must come like himself, like him *that is a Creator*; Wherefore the Heavens and the earth must move at his presence, to signify that they acknowledge him as such, and pay him that homage that is due to him, as their God and great *Creator*.

We that are Christians have been trained up by his Son in his School this many a day, and have been told what a God our Father is, *what an arm he has, and with what a voice he can thunder; how he can deck himself, with Majesty, and excellency, and array himself with beauty and glory. How he can cast abroad the rage of his wrath: and behold every one that is proud, and abase him.* (Job 40. 9, 10, 11.) Have we not talked of what he did at the red Sea, and in the land

Advice to Sufferers. 191

land of *Ham* many years ago, and have we forgot him now? Have we not vaunted, and boasted of our God both in Church, Pulpit, and Books; and spake to the praise of them, that in stead of stones, attempted to drive Antichrist out of the World with their lives and their blood? and are we afraid of our God? He was God, a *Creator*, then; and is he not God now? and will he not be as good to us, as to them that have gone before us? or would we limit him to appear in such ways, as only *smile* upon our flesh: and have him stay; and not shew himself in his heart-shaking dispensations until we are dead, and gone? what, if we must go now to Heaven? and what if he is thus come down to fetch us to himself? if we have been wise as Serpents, and innocent as Doves; If we can say, *neither against the Law of the Jews, neither against the Temple, nor against Caesar, have we offended any thing at all*: of what should we be afraid? let Heaven and Earth come together, I dare say they will not hurt us.

Our

Our Lord Jesus when dilating upon some of the great, and necessary works of our Creator, puts check before hand to all uncomely fears: to such fears as become not the faith, and profession of a Christian: Brother, saith he, shall deliver up the Brother to death, and the Father the Child: and the children shall rise up against their Parents, and cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my names sake. What follows (ver. 28.) fear them not. And again, (in ver. 31.) fear ye not. (Mat. 10.)

So again, (Mat. 24.) Nation shall rise against Nation; there shall be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes, &c. They shall deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you. Many shall be offended, and shall betray one another. And many false Prophets shall arise and deceive many. And yet for all this we are bid not to be afraid, for all these things with all other are ordered, limited, enlarged and straitned, bounded and buffered by the will, and hand, and power of that God unto whom Peter bids us commit the keeping of our Souls, as unto a faithful Creator. (ver. 4.)

Advice to Sufferers. 193

to ver. 11. Mark. 13. 5. to the 9. To wait for God in the way of his judgments, doth well become a Christian.

To believe he loves us, when he shews himself terrible to us, is also very much becoming of us. Wherefore has he given us grace, is it that we should live by sense? Wherefore has he sometimes visited us, is it that our hearts might be estranged from him, and that we still should love the World? And I say again, wherefore has he so plainly told us of his greatness, and of what he can do, is it not, that we might be *still*, when the World is disturbed? and that we might hope for good things to come out of such providences, that to sense, look as if themselves would eat up and devour all?

Let us wait upon God, walk with God, believe in God, and commit our selves, our Soul, our Body to God to be kept. Yea, let us be content to be at the dispose of God, and rejoyce to see him act according to all his wonderful works. For this is a posture
K highly

194 Advice to Sufferers.

highly becoming them that say of God, he is their Father, and that have committed the keeping of their Soul to him as unto a Creator.

A comely thing it is for the Soul that feareth God, to love, and reverence him in all his appearances. We should be like the Spaniel-dogg, even lie at the foot of our God, as he at the foot of his Master: yea, and should be glad, could we but see his face, though he treads us down with his feet.

Ay, says one Son, I could, if I thought this high God would regard me, and take notice of my laying of my Soul at his foot, while I suffer for his word and truth in the World.

Why, do but see now, how the holy Ghost for our help, hath hedge up that way, in at which unbelief would come, that their might as to this, be no room left for doubting. For as he calleth the God, unto whom we are bid to commit the keeping of our Soule, a Creator: so he saith, that he is a Creator that is faithful. Let them commit the keeping of their Soul unto him in well-doing, as unto [a faithful] Creator. A

Creator

Advice to Sufferers. 199

Creator that will concern himself with the Soul committed to his trust, and that will be *faithful* to it, according to all that he has promised.

This therefore of Gods *faithfulness*, being added to his *might* and *power*, is in it self, a ground of great support to those that have in a way of well-*doing* committed themselves, their Souls, to him to keep. A Creator, what is it that a Creator cannot do? A *faithful* Creator; what is it that one that is *faithful* will not do? that is, -when he is engaged. And now he is engaged, because thou hast committed thy Soul to him to keep, and because he has bid thee do so. Let them commit the keeping of their Soul to him, as unto a *faithful* Creator. I have sometimes seen an unfaithful man engaged, when a thing has been committed to him to keep. A man that is a Thief, a cheater, a defrauder, will yet be faithful to him that will commit a charge to him to keep. And the reason is, because, though he can steal, cheat, defraud, without being taken notice of; yet, he must be seen and known, if he be false

196 Advice to Sufferers.

in that which is committed to him to keep. I know the comparison is odious, yet such have been made by a holier mouth than mine, and as the case may be, they may be aptest of all to illustrate that which a man is about to explain. *Hark, what the unjust Judge saith*, says the Lord Jesus Christ. (*Luk. 18.*)

To commit thy Soul to God, is to trust him with it; to commit thy Soul to God, is to engage him to look to it. And if he should not be faithful *now*, he will not be so, in any case. For himself has bidden thee do it, he has also promised to keep it, as has been already shewed in the former part of this discourse. Besides, he is here said to be *faithful*, to be a *faithful* Creator. He *challenges* this of faithfulness to himself *alone*. Yea, let God be *true*, and *every* man a *liar*. (*Rom. 3. 4.*) This therefore doth still help to encourage them that would be faithful to him, to commit the keeping of our Soul to him. A faithful man will encourage one much, how much more should the faithful-
ness

ness of God encourage us?

Here therefore we have a closing word indeed. A word to wrap up the Text with, that is as full of good, as the *Sun* is of light, what can be fitter spoken? What can be added; what now is wanting to the help of him that has committed his Soul to God to keep it while he is suffering according to his will in the world? He is engaged, as I said by the act, *thou hast committed thy Soul to him to keep.* He is engaged by his own word, *he has bidden thee commit thy Soul to him to keep.* He is engaged by his declaring of himself to be faithful; for that has encouraged thee to commit thy Soul to him to keep. Besides, he has promised to do it; he has sworn to do it.

For when God made promise to Abraham: because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, Saying, Surely, blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so after he had patiently endured, (as thou must do) he obtained the promise. For men verily swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.

198 Advice to Sufferers.

Wherein God willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his Counsel, confirmed it by an oath. That by two immutable things, in which it was not possible that God should lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge, to lay hold upon the hope set before us. Which hope we have as an anchor of the Soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, whither the forerunner is for us entered; even Jesus, made an high Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedek. (Heb. 6. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20.)

Thus you see what ground we have, who suffer according to the will of God, and that have committed the keeping of our Souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator. Here therefore I might make a stop, and conclude as to this advice: but now we are in, we will proceed a little further, and will fall down upon three or four particulars.

First then, He will be faithful to us in this. He will keep us from those allurements of the world that a suffering Saint

is subject to. They that suffer have other kind of temptations upon this account than other Christians have. The liberty of others while they are in bonds, is a temptation to them; The peace of others, while they are in trouble, is a temptation to them; The enjoyments of others, while their houses are emptying, and their goods taking away, while their own *matter* is sold unto them, and while they are buying their own wood, is a great temptation to them: (Lamen. 5.4.) And this temptation, were it not that we have to do with a God that is faithful, would assuredly be a great snare unto them. *But God is faithful, and will not suffer you to be tempted, as to this, above what you are able.* (1 Cor. 10. 13.)

Nay, a suffering man has not only these things lying before him as a temptation, but perhaps the wife of the bosome lies at him, saying, O do not cast thy self away: if thou takest this course, what shall I do, thou hast said, thou lovest me, now make it manifest by granting this my

200 Advice to Sufferers.

small request. *Do not still remain in thine integrity.* Next to this come the Children, all which are like to come to poverty, to beggery, to be undone for want of wherewithal to feed, and cloath, and provide for them for time to come.

Now also come Kindred and Relations, and acquaintance, some chide, some cry, some argue, some threaten, some promise; some flatter, and some do all, to bes fool him for so unadvised an act as to cast away himself, and to bring his Wife and Children to beggery, for such a thing as Religion. These are sore temptations.

Next to these come the Terrors of men, the gripes of the Laws, the shadow of death, and no man can tell what. All which are sufficient to pull a man from the gates of life, were he there, if the faithful Creator stands not to him. *But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it.*

1 Peter 5

But

30 *But God is faithful:]* It saith not, that thou art; *But God is faithful,* to his Son, to whom he has given thee; to his promise, the which he has given thee; to his cause, to which he has called thee; and to thy Soul, the which thou hast committed to his trust, and the which he also has taken the charge of, as he is a *faithful Creator.*

31 *And will not suffer thee to be tempted.]* How, not tempted! no not above what thou art able. He that tempts thee, doth not at all consider thy strength, so as to stop when he sees thou art weak: he would have thee overthrown, for therefore it is that he tempteth thee. But God will not suffer that, because he is faithful, and because thou hast committed the keeping of thy Soul unto him in well-doing, as unto a *faithful Creator.*

32 *Not tempted above that ye are able.]* He saith not above that ye are well able. Indeed thy strength shall be proportioned to the temptation, but thou maiest have none over, and above, to spare: thou shalt not have
K 5
bigger

bigger load, than God will give thee shoulders to bear. Christ did bear his burden, but it made him cry out and sweat as it were greats drop of blood to carry it. Bear thy burden thou shalt, and not be destroyed by it; but perhaps thou mayest sometimes roar under it by reason of the disquietness of thy heart.

But will with the temptation make a way of escape.] With the temptation, not without it; thou must be tempted, and must escape too. With the temptation. As sure as Satan is licensed, so sure he is limited, and when Satan has ended all the temptation, he shall depart from thee. (Luke 4. 13.) He will with the temptation, by such a managing of it, as shall break his own neck: God can admit Satan to tempt, and make the Christian wise to manage the temptation for his own escape.

Make a way.] It may be thou seeest no way of escape. It may be there is no way, no way in all the world to escape well; but God can make a way. When Israel was hem'd in at the Red Sea, there was as then, no way, no way

way in all the world to escape. O but God made a way, and a path-way too, and that thorough the mighty waters. (*Exo. 15. 8. 16. Psal. 106. 9. Psal. 78. 35.*) He will make away with the temptation: or will with the temptation make away to escape, that you may be able to bear it.

These are the words of the holy Ghost who is God, and they are spoken, yea committed to record for this very purpose, that those that are under affliction, might commit the keeping of their Soul to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator. That's the first,

Secondly, He will also be faithful to us as to this, *He will give us a competent measure of wisdom* that in our suffering condition we may in all things be made able to manage our state with discretion. We are perhaps weak of natural abilities, parts of utterance, or the like, and our adversaries are Learned, Eloquent, and ripe of Parts. Thou hast the disadvantage on thy side, and they have what the world can afford, to encourage them: thou art weak
of

of Spirit, they are bold, and strong. The great and the mighty are with thy enemies, but on thy side *there is no comforter.* (Eccles. 4. 1.)

Why now here is, as to this, and to what else can be objected, the faithfulness of God engaged. *First in a general promise; I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.* (Heb. 13. 5. 6.) Secondly, we have an invitation to come to this faithful God for wisdom to assist and help. For after he had said, *my brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations:* and let patience have its perfect work: he adds, *If any man lack wisdom, let him ask it of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him.* (James 1. 2, 3, 4, 5.) Here is more than an invitation, here is a promise, *it shall be given him:* and all to shew us what a faithful Creator we have committed our Souls unto. Doth any lack wisdom to know how to carry it in a time of Tryal, *let them ask it of God:* of the God that is wisdom it self; let him ask it of God the liberal giver; who giveth to all men
all

all that they have, and upbraideh not for their unworthiness.

Nor doth the holy Ghost stop here, but enlarges himself in a more particular way to those that suffer according to the Text, saying, *But when they deliuer you up, take no thought, how, or what you shall speak: for it shall be giuen you in the same hour, what you shall speak.* (Mat. 10. 19.)

I have often been amazed in my mind at this Text, for how could Jesus Christ have said such a word, if he had not been able to perform it. This Text therefore declares him to be God. It is also a proof of faithfulness to those that suffer for him.

For it is as if he should say, try me and trust me; if I stand not by you in a day of distress, never believe me more. You suffering according to the will of God, and committing your Soule to him in well-doing; I will giue you a mouth and wisdom, (for so he has it in Luke 21. 15.) which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist. Here is no consideration of what capacity the people might be of that were

were to be persecuted, but whats matter what they are; if fools, it is no matter; if wise, it helpeth nothing. A mouth and wisdom is to be given, that of it self shall do. And this is according to that other Scripture mentioned afore, where it saith, *No weapon formed against thee shall prosper: and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment, thou shalt condemn.* (Isa. 54. 17.)

Although it may happen in this, as in the former temptation: The Devil and his agents may give the Saints, in their pleading for the truth, their bellies full both of cross answers, equivocations, sophistications, wrong glosses and erroneous interpretations. But truth shall prevail, shall turn the scale, and bear away the victory.

Thirdly, He will also be faithful to us in this, *we shall not want spiritual support to help us to bear up under our particular parts of suffering.* I do not say that thou shalt be comforted all the while: but I say he will be to thee so faithful, as to comfort thee under those *rhodes, guests, blasts, or battering storms* that beat against thy wall. (Isa. 43. 2.)

Look then what present degrees or aggravating appearances are in thy afflictions, to such a degree shalt thou at times be supported. For as surely as ever the spirit of God moved Samson at times in the Camp of Dan, when he lay against the Philistines; so will the spirit of God move in, and upon thee to comfort and to strengthen thee, whilst thou sufferest for his name in the World. *As our afflictions abound for Christ; so shall our consolations abound by him. (2 Cor. 1. 5. 6.)* I have observed that God laies this, that he useth to comfort his people in a time of sufferings as an aggravation of sin upon them that did use to *stuck* and *shrink* under sufferings. I, saith he, *even I am he that comforteth you; who art thou that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die? (Isa. 51. 12.)*

God, says the wise man, *hath set the one against the other, (the day of adversity, and the day of prosperity)* to the end that man should find nothing after him (to complain of.) For as certainly as there is a time to *mourn*; so certainly there is a time to *re-*

joyce: let, I say, for them that suffer for Gods cause according to Gods will: (Eccles. 7. 14. chap. 3. 4.)

There are several degrees of suffering for righteousness, there is the *scourge of the tongue*. The ruin of an estate, the loss of liberty, a Gaol, a Gibbet, a Stake, a Dagger. Now answerable to these are the comforts of the holy Ghost prepared, like to like, part proportioned to part, only the consolations are said to *abound*. (2Cor. 1.)

But the lighter the sufferings are, the more difficult it is to judge of the comforts of the spirit of God, for 'tis common for a man to be comfortable under sufferings, when he suffereth but little, *and knows also* that his enemy can touch his flesh, his estate, or the like but little: I say, 'tis common for such a man to be comfortable in his sufferings, from the consideration that his enemies can touch him no further. And this may be the joy of the flesh, the result of reason, and may be very much, if not altogether, without a mixture of the joy of the holy Ghost therewith:

therewith. The more deep, therefore, and the more dreadful the sufferings are, the more clearly are seen the comforts of the spirit, when a man has comfort where the flesh is dead, stirreth not, and can do nothing. When a man can be comfortable at the loss of all, when he is under the sentence of death, or at the place of execution. When a mans *cause*, a mans *conscience*, the *promise*, and the *holy Ghost*, have all one comfortable voice, and do all, together with their Trumpets, make *one* sound in the Soul; then the comforts are good, of the right kind, of God and his spirit.

I told you before that there are several degrees of sufferings; wherefore it is not to be expected that he that suffers but little, should partake of the comforts that are prepared for them that suffer much. He that has only the scourge of the *tongue*, knows not what are the comforts that are prepared for him that meets with the scourge of the *whip*. And how should a man know what manner of comforts
the

210 Advice to Sufferers.

the holy Ghost doth use to give at the Gaol and the Gibbet, when himself for righteousness never was there.

But whether this or the other Christian knows it, God has his consolations for his suffering people, and those too such as are proportioned to the nature or degree of their sufferings. The which shall assuredly be made appear to them that shall after a godly manner stick to his truth, and trust him with their Souls. *Joseph* was cast into Prison, but God was with him. *John* was banished into the Isle called *Palmos*, for the word of God: But what revelations of God had he there! even such as he was a stranger to all his life before: this therefore is to be well heeded. For it is a demonstration of the faithfulness of God to those that, suffering according to his will, do commit the keeping of their Souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

Fourthly, He will also be faithful to us in this. *He will not let the sharpness, nor keenness nor venom of the arrows of the enemies of his people, reach so far as*

Advice to Sufferers. 211

to destroy both body and Soul at once : but he will preserve them, when what can be done, is done to his eternal Kingdom and Glory. Thus being preserved to his eternal Kingdom and glory, is a marvellous thing. But it must be so, because God has called them to it. Wherefore after Peter had told them that the Devil their adversary sought to devour them, and had bidden them resist him, stedfast in the faith, he saith, *But the God of all grace, who hath called you unto his eternal Kingdom and glory by Christ Jesus, after ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, strengthen, stablish, settle you.* (1 Pet. 5. 8, 9, 10.)

The truth is, persecution of the godly was, of God, never intended for their destruction, but for their Glory, and to make them shine the more when they are beyond this valley of the shadow of death. Indeed we oft-times, when we are persecuted do feel the terrors of our adversaries in our minds. But 'tis not because they can shoot them thither, nor because they of themselves have power to reach so far, but we, like fools, by
our

our ignorance and unbelief, do admit them thither.

No *suffering*, nor *inflicter* of suffering, can reach the peace of the sufferer without his own consent. This is provision of Gods making. Yea and if thorow our folly their terror is admitted to touch us, yet since we are not our own, but are bought with a price, we are not so at our own dispose, but that God will have the butting and bounding of their rage, as also a power to uphold and support our spirits, *When I said my foot slipped, thy mercy, O Lord, held me up.* And the reason why by Gods ordinance the spirit is not to be touched in suffering, is, because *that is it* that is to sustain the infirmity of the sufferer: therefore God will have the spirit of his servants kept sound, and in good health, (*Prov. 18. 14. Isaiah 57. 16.*)

The room therefore, and the ground that the enemy has to play upon, is the body and outward substance of the people of God, but the spirit is reserved, for the reason hinted before, and also that it might be capable of maintaining

maintaining of communion with God. And how else could they obey that command that bids them rejoyce in tribulation, *and glorifie God in the fires,* as it is (*Rom. 12 and Isaiah 24. 15.*)

But, I say, if they have not power to touch, much less to destroy body and Soul for ever. The body is Gods, and he gives that to them to destroy; the spirit is Gods, and he keeps that to himself: to shew that he has both power to do with us what he pleases, and that he will recover our body also out of their hand; for if the spirit lives, so must the body, when men have done what they can therewith. This is the argument of our Lord Jesus Christ himself. (*Luke 20. 37. 38.*)

Therefore, the faithfulness of God, not only *is*, but also *will* be seen, by them that dare trust him till the next World, to his glory, and their eternal comfort.

We will now conclude with a short word by way of use, you see how I have opened the Text, and what hath naturally followed thereupon: from the whole of which may be gathered,

First,

First, that the people of God are a suffering people, a people subject to trouble for their faith and profession. The reason is, besides what hath been said already, because the power of truth is in their hearts, and shews it self in their lives; a thing which the Devil and the World can by no means abide. *He that is born after the flesh, persecuteth him that is born after the spirit.*

(Gal. 4.) For they cannot agree in Religion, the godly are so devout, and the other are so profane, that they cannot do. Not but that Gods People, as they are commanded, are willing to let them alone; but the other they cannot bear, that they should serve God as they have said. (Mat. 15. 14.)

And hence ariseth persecution. The World also would have the Religion of the godly to be counted false; a thing that the others can by no means endure, but will stand by, and maintain (yet in all peaceable manner) their own ways before them, whatever it costs.

The Christian, and the carnal professor, are like those two Harlots that
you

you read of in the Book of Kings: who strove for the living child, whose it should be, whose contest could not be decided, until it came to the sword of the King. (1 Kings 3.) O but when the sword was drawn, under a shew as if the living Child must now be cut in two, then the true mother was known from the false. *For her bowels yearned upon her Son.* (ver. 26. 27.) The World, what shew soever they have for Religion, and however they urge it, that the truth is with them, have no yearning of bowels for it. *Let it be neither mine nor thine, (said she) but divide it :* but the woman, whose the living child was, had not an heart to say so. Religion may lie and die in a ditch, for all those that are given to their sins : nor doth their zeal appear; except when they are griping of the godly for his faith towards God. Bowels, yearning of Bowels over Gods condemned Religion, is only found in the Souls of those who own God has made it.

Secondly, Is it so? are Gods people a suffering people? Then this should

216 Advice to Sufferers.

should inform them that will be Religious, to prepare themselves for what is like to attend them for their Religion. To prepare, I say, not with carnal weapons but with the graces of the spirit of God, that will help them with meekness and patience to endure. Sit down then, I say, and count up the cost, before for Religion thou engagest too far; lest thou take upon thee to meddle with that, which thou wilt not *know what to do with, in the end.* (Prov. 25. 8. Luke 14. 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30.)

Many there be that are faulty here, they have taken upon them to profess, not considering *what*, what they have taken in hand may cost them. Wherefore when troubles come indeed, then they *start*, and cry, This they like not, (because they looked not for it); and if this be the way to heaven, let who will go on in it for them. Thus they take offence, and leave Christs cause and people to shift for themselves in the World. (Mat. 13. 20, 21.)

Thirdly, But let Gods people think never the worse of Religion, because
of

of the course entertainment it meet-
eth with in the World. 'Tis better
to chuse God and affliction, than the
World, and sin, and carnal peace.
'Tis necessary that we should suffer, be-
cause that we have sinned: And if
God will have us suffer a little while
here for his word, instead of suffer-
ing for our sins in Hell, let's be content,
and count it a mercy with thankfulness.

The wicked are reserved to the day of
destruction, they shall be brought forth
to the day of wrath. (Job 21. 30.)

How kindly therefore doth God
deal with us, when he chuses to afflict
us but for a little, that with everlasting
kindness he may have mercy upon us.

(Isa. 54. 7, 8.) And 'tis better, if the
will of God be so, that we suffer for well-
doing, than for evil doing. (1 Pet. 2. 20.)

Fourthly, Look not therefore upon
the sufferings of Gods people for their
Religion, to be tokens of Gods great
anger. 'Tis, to be sure, as our hea-
venly Father orders it, rather a
token of his love; for suffering
for the Gospel, and for the sincere
profession of it, is indeed a dignity

L

put

put upon us : a dignity that all men are not counted worthy of. Count it therefore a favour that God has bestowed upon thee his truth, and graces to enable thee to profess it, though thou be made to suffer for it. (*Acts. 5. 41.*) Thou mightest have been a sufferer for thy sins in Hell : but thou art not : but contrariwise art, perhaps, suffering for conscience to God ; this is a dignity : for that thou dost thus by vertue of an heavenly gift, on the behalf of Christ, for the Gospel sake, and according to the will of God. This is a dignity that a persecutor shall not be counted worthy of, until he first convert to Christ, (*Philip. 1. 29.*)

Fifthly, take thy affliction with meekness and patience, though thou endurest grief wrongfully. For this is thank worthy, if a man for conscience towards God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. (*1 Pet. 2.*) Lay thy hand then upon thy mouth, and speak not a word of ill against him that doth thee wrong, leave thy cause and thy enemy to God ; yea, rather pray that his

his sin may not be laid to his charge; wherefore, as I said before, now shew thy self a good man, by loving, pitying, praying for, and by doing good, as thou art commanded, *to them that despitefully use thee.* (Mat. 5. 44.)

I know thy flesh will be apt to hiss, and to be angry, and to wish, would thou mightest revenge thy self. But this is base, carnal, sensual, devilish: cast therefore such thoughts from thee, as thoughts that are not fit for a Christians breast: and betake thee to those weapons that are not carnal. For the Artillery of a Christian, is the word, faith, and prayer: and in our patience we must possess our souls. (2 Cor. 10. 5. Luke 21. 16, 17, 18, 19.)

Sixthly, Be much in the consideration of the All-sufficiency of thy Father, whose cause thou hast espoused, whose word thou hast chosen for thy heritage, and whose paths thou delightest to walk in. I say, be much in considering how all the World is sustained by him, and that all life and breath

220 **Abbate to Sufferers.**

is in his hand to continue, or diminish as he pleases. Think with thy self also how able he is to rescue thee from all affliction, or to uphold thee in it with a quiet mind. Go to him continually as to a fountain of life that is open, for the supply of the needy. Remember also, if he comes not at thy call, and comforteth thee not so soon as thou desirest: it is not of want of love or compassion to thy Soul, but to try thy graces, and to shew to the fallen Angels that thou wilt serve God for nought, rather than give out. Also, if it seemeth to thee, as if God took no care of thee to help thee, but that he hath rather turned thee over to the ungodly, count this also as a sign that he delights to see thee hold fast his name, though thou art laid under the greatest of disadvantages. *If the scourge stay suddenly (that's more than it hath done to thee) he will laugh at the tryal of the innocent.* (Job 9. 23.)

It is a great delight to our God to see his people hold fast their integrity, and not to deny his Name when pressed.

der such cloudy dispensations, and discouraging circumstances. And considerations that thy ~~now~~ doing is pleasing in his sight thorough Christ, will be a support unto thee. God sees thee, though thou canst not now see him, and he observeth *now* thy way, though darkness is round about him: and when he hath tryed thee, thou shalt come forth like Gold.

Seventhly, Take heed of setting of thy self a bound and period to thy sufferings (unless that period be the grave.) Say not to thy afflictors, Hitherto; and no further, and here shall your proud waves be stayed. I say take heed of doing thus, for fear God should let them go beyond thee. For a man is not prepared to suffer, further than he thinketh the enemy may be permitted to go. Hence Christ sets their bounds at the loss of life, and no nearer. So then so far as they go beyond thee: so far they will find thee unprovided, and so not fortified for a reception of their on-set with that Christian Gallantry which becomes thee. Observe *Paul*, he died daily,

222 Advice to Sufferers.

he was always delivered unto death, he despaired of life; and this is the way to be prepared for any calamity. When a man thinks he has only to prepare for an assault by *foemen*, how shall he contend with *horses*? or if he looks no further than to horses, what will he do at the *swellings of Jordan*? (Jer. 12. 5, 6.)

Wherefore let thine enemies be no bounds: say not, they shall not pursue me to the death, have the sentence of death in thy self; For though they may but *tick*, and *toy* with thee at first, their Sword may reach thy heart blood at last. The *Cat* at play with the *Mouse*, is (sometimes) a fit emblem of the way of the wicked with the children of God. Wherefore, as I said, be always dying, die dayly: he that is not only ready to be bound, but to die, is fit to encounter any amazement.

Eightly, If thine enemies would, or do put thee under a *cloud*, if they wrap thee up in a *Bears-skin*, and then set the *Dogges* upon thee, marvel not at the matter, this was *Joseph's*, *David's*, *Christ's*, *Stephen's* portion, only be thou innocent;

innocent ; say nothing, do nothing that should render thee faulty: yea, say and do always that that should render thee a good neighbour, a good Christian, and a faithful Subject. This is the way to help thee to make with boldness thy appeals to God : This is the way to imbolden thy face against the faces of thine enemies: this is the way to keep thy conscience quiet and peaceable within thee, and this is the way to provoke God to appear for thy rescue, or to revenge thy blood when thou art gone.

And do this, because 'tis thy duty, we must fear God, and honour the King. And because this is the way to make the work of thy enemies, hard: Few men have that boldness as to say, this I do against you, because you profess Christ. When they persecuted the Lord himself, they said to him, *for a good work we stone thee not.* (John 10. 32. 33.) Religion that is pure is a hot thing, and it usually burns the fingers of those that fight against it: wherefore 'tis not common for men to oppose Religion under its own

224 Advice to Sufferers.

naked complexion: wherefore the
Jews sought to fasten other matters up-
on Christ, to kill him for them; though
the great spite they had against him,
was for his Doctrine and miracles:
It was for envy to that, that they set
themselves against him; and that made
them invent to charge him with Re-
bellion and Treason. (Mat. 27. 18. Luk.

23. 2. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100. 101. 102. 103. 104. 105. 106. 107. 108. 109. 110. 111. 112. 113. 114. 115. 116. 117. 118. 119. 120. 121. 122. 123. 124. 125. 126. 127. 128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134. 135. 136. 137. 138. 139. 140. 141. 142. 143. 144. 145. 146. 147. 148. 149. 150. 151. 152. 153. 154. 155. 156. 157. 158. 159. 160. 161. 162. 163. 164. 165. 166. 167. 168. 169. 170. 171. 172. 173. 174. 175. 176. 177. 178. 179. 180. 181. 182. 183. 184. 185. 186. 187. 188. 189. 190. 191. 192. 193. 194. 195. 196. 197. 198. 199. 200. 201. 202. 203. 204. 205. 206. 207. 208. 209. 210. 211. 212. 213. 214. 215. 216. 217. 218. 219. 220. 221. 222. 223. 224. 225. 226. 227. 228. 229. 230. 231. 232. 233. 234. 235. 236. 237. 238. 239. 240. 241. 242. 243. 244. 245. 246. 247. 248. 249. 250. 251. 252. 253. 254. 255. 256. 257. 258. 259. 260. 261. 262. 263. 264. 265. 266. 267. 268. 269. 270. 271. 272. 273. 274. 275. 276. 277. 278. 279. 280. 281. 282. 283. 284. 285. 286. 287. 288. 289. 290. 291. 292. 293. 294. 295. 296. 297. 298. 299. 300. 301. 302. 303. 304. 305. 306. 307. 308. 309. 310. 311. 312. 313. 314. 315. 316. 317. 318. 319. 320. 321. 322. 323. 324. 325. 326. 327. 328. 329. 330. 331. 332. 333. 334. 335. 336. 337. 338. 339. 340. 341. 342. 343. 344. 345. 346. 347. 348. 349. 350. 351. 352. 353. 354. 355. 356. 357. 358. 359. 360. 361. 362. 363. 364. 365. 366. 367. 368. 369. 370. 371. 372. 373. 374. 375. 376. 377. 378. 379. 380. 381. 382. 383. 384. 385. 386. 387. 388. 389. 390. 391. 392. 393. 394. 395. 396. 397. 398. 399. 400. 401. 402. 403. 404. 405. 406. 407. 408. 409. 410. 411. 412. 413. 414. 415. 416. 417. 418. 419. 420. 421. 422. 423. 424. 425. 426. 427. 428. 429. 430. 431. 432. 433. 434. 435. 436. 437. 438. 439. 440. 441. 442. 443. 444. 445. 446. 447. 448. 449. 450. 451. 452. 453. 454. 455. 456. 457. 458. 459. 460. 461. 462. 463. 464. 465. 466. 467. 468. 469. 470. 471. 472. 473. 474. 475. 476. 477. 478. 479. 480. 481. 482. 483. 484. 485. 486. 487. 488. 489. 490. 491. 492. 493. 494. 495. 496. 497. 498. 499. 500. 501. 502. 503. 504. 505. 506. 507. 508. 509. 510. 511. 512. 513. 514. 515. 516. 517. 518. 519. 520. 521. 522. 523. 524. 525. 526. 527. 528. 529. 530. 531. 532. 533. 534. 535. 536. 537. 538. 539. 540. 541. 542. 543. 544. 545. 546. 547. 548. 549. 550. 551. 552. 553. 554. 555. 556. 557. 558. 559. 560. 561. 562. 563. 564. 565. 566. 567. 568. 569. 570. 571. 572. 573. 574. 575. 576. 577. 578. 579. 580. 581. 582. 583. 584. 585. 586. 587. 588. 589. 590. 591. 592. 593. 594. 595. 596. 597. 598. 599. 600. 601. 602. 603. 604. 605. 606. 607. 608. 609. 610. 611. 612. 613. 614. 615. 616. 617. 618. 619. 620. 621. 622. 623. 624. 625. 626. 627. 628. 629. 630. 631. 632. 633. 634. 635. 636. 637. 638. 639. 640. 641. 642. 643. 644. 645. 646. 647. 648. 649. 650. 651. 652. 653. 654. 655. 656. 657. 658. 659. 660. 661. 662. 663. 664. 665. 666. 667. 668. 669. 670. 671. 672. 673. 674. 675. 676. 677. 678. 679. 680. 681. 682. 683. 684. 685. 686. 687. 688. 689. 690. 691. 692. 693. 694. 695. 696. 697. 698. 699. 700. 701. 702. 703. 704. 705. 706. 707. 708. 709. 710. 711. 712. 713. 714. 715. 716. 717. 718. 719. 720. 721. 722. 723. 724. 725. 726. 727. 728. 729. 730. 731. 732. 733. 734. 735. 736. 737. 738. 739. 740. 741. 742. 743. 744. 745. 746. 747. 748. 749. 750. 751. 752. 753. 754. 755. 756. 757. 758. 759. 760. 761. 762. 763. 764. 765. 766. 767. 768. 769. 770. 771. 772. 773. 774. 775. 776. 777. 778. 779. 780. 781. 782. 783. 784. 785. 786. 787. 788. 789. 790. 791. 792. 793. 794. 795. 796. 797. 798. 799. 800. 801. 802. 803. 804. 805. 806. 807. 808. 809. 810. 811. 812. 813. 814. 815. 816. 817. 818. 819. 820. 821. 822. 823. 824. 825. 826. 827. 828. 829. 830. 831. 832. 833. 834. 835. 836. 837. 838. 839. 840. 841. 842. 843. 844. 845. 846. 847. 848. 849. 850. 851. 852. 853. 854. 855. 856. 857. 858. 859. 860. 861. 862. 863. 864. 865. 866. 867. 868. 869. 870. 871. 872. 873. 874. 875. 876. 877. 878. 879. 880. 881. 882. 883. 884. 885. 886. 887. 888. 889. 890. 891. 892. 893. 894. 895. 896. 897. 898. 899. 900. 901. 902. 903. 904. 905. 906. 907. 908. 909. 910. 911. 912. 913. 914. 915. 916. 917. 918. 919. 920. 921. 922. 923. 924. 925. 926. 927. 928. 929. 930. 931. 932. 933. 934. 935. 936. 937. 938. 939. 940. 941. 942. 943. 944. 945. 946. 947. 948. 949. 950. 951. 952. 953. 954. 955. 956. 957. 958. 959. 960. 961. 962. 963. 964. 965. 966. 967. 968. 969. 970. 971. 972. 973. 974. 975. 976. 977. 978. 979. 980. 981. 982. 983. 984. 985. 986. 987. 988. 989. 990. 991. 992. 993. 994. 995. 996. 997. 998. 999. 1000. 1001. 1002. 1003. 1004. 1005. 1006. 1007. 1008. 1009. 1010. 1011. 1012. 1013. 1014. 1015. 1016. 1017. 1018. 1019. 1020. 1021. 1022. 1023. 1024. 1025. 1026. 1027. 1028. 1029. 1030. 1031. 1032. 1033. 1034. 1035. 1036. 1037. 1038. 1039. 1040. 1041. 1042. 1043. 1044. 1045. 1046. 1047. 1048. 1049. 1050. 1051. 1052. 1053. 1054. 1055. 1056. 1057. 1058. 1059. 1060. 1061. 1062. 1063. 1064. 1065. 1066. 1067. 1068. 1069. 1070. 1071. 1072. 1073. 1074. 1075. 1076. 1077. 1078. 1079. 1080. 1081. 1082. 1083. 1084. 1085. 1086. 1087. 1088. 1089. 1090. 1091. 1092. 1093. 1094. 1095. 1096. 1097. 1098. 1099. 1100. 1101. 1102. 1103. 1104. 1105. 1106. 1107. 1108. 1109. 1110. 1111. 1112. 1113. 1114. 1115. 1116. 1117. 1118. 1119. 1120. 1121. 1122. 1123. 1124. 1125. 1126. 1127. 1128. 1129. 1130. 1131. 1132. 1133. 1134. 1135. 1136. 1137. 1138. 1139. 1140. 1141. 1142. 1143. 1144. 1145. 1146. 1147. 1148. 1149. 1150. 1151. 1152. 1153. 1154. 1155. 1156. 1157. 1158. 1159. 1160. 1161. 1162. 1163. 1164. 1165. 1166. 1167. 1168. 1169. 1170. 1171. 1172. 1173. 1174. 1175. 1176. 1177. 1178. 1179. 1180. 1181. 1182. 1183. 1184. 1185. 1186. 1187. 1188. 1189. 1190. 1191. 1192. 1193. 1194. 1195. 1196. 1197. 1198. 1199. 1200. 1201. 1202. 1203. 1204. 1205. 1206. 1207. 1208. 1209. 1210. 1211. 1212. 1213. 1214. 1215. 1216. 1217. 1218. 1219. 1220. 1221. 1222. 1223. 1224. 1225. 1226. 1227. 1228. 1229. 1230. 1231. 1232. 1233. 1234. 1235. 1236. 1237. 1238. 1239. 1240. 1241. 1242. 1243. 1244. 1245. 1246. 1247. 1248. 1249. 1250. 1251. 1252. 1253. 1254. 1255. 1256. 1257. 1258. 1259. 1260. 1261. 1262. 1263. 1264. 1265. 1266. 1267. 1268. 1269. 1270. 1271. 1272. 1273. 1274. 1275. 1276. 1277. 1278. 1279. 1280. 1281. 1282. 1283. 1284. 1285. 1286. 1287. 1288. 1289. 1290. 1291. 1292. 1293. 1294. 1295. 1296. 1297. 1298. 1299. 1300. 1301. 1302. 1303. 1304. 1305. 1306. 1307. 1308. 1309. 1310. 1311. 1312. 1313. 1314. 1315. 1316. 1317. 1318. 1319. 1320. 1321. 1322. 1323. 1324. 1325. 1326. 1327. 1328. 1329. 1330. 1331. 1332. 1333. 1334. 1335. 1336. 1337. 1338. 1339. 1340. 1341. 1342. 1343. 1344. 1345. 1346. 1347. 1348. 1349. 1350. 1351. 1352. 1353. 1354. 1355. 1356. 1357. 1358. 1359. 1360. 1361. 1362. 1363. 1364. 1365. 1366. 1367. 1368. 1369. 1370. 1371. 1372. 1373. 1374. 1375. 1376. 1377. 1378. 1379. 1380. 1381. 1382. 1383. 1384. 1385. 1386. 1387. 1388. 1389. 1390. 1391. 1392. 1393. 1394. 1395. 1396. 1397. 1398. 1399. 1400. 1401. 1402. 1403. 1404. 1405. 1406. 1407. 1408. 1409. 1410. 1411. 1412. 1413. 1414. 1415. 1416. 1417. 1418. 1419. 1420. 1421. 1422. 1423. 1424. 1425. 1426. 1427. 1428. 1429. 1430. 1431. 1432. 1433. 1434. 1435. 1436. 1437. 1438. 1439. 1440. 1441. 1442. 1443. 1444. 1445. 1446. 1447. 1448. 1449. 1450. 1451. 1452. 1453. 1454. 1455. 1456. 1457. 1458. 1459. 1460. 1461. 1462. 1463. 1464. 1465. 1466. 1467. 1468. 1469. 1470. 1471. 1472. 1473. 1474. 1475. 1476. 1477. 1478. 1479. 1480. 1481. 1482. 1483. 1484. 1485. 1486. 1487. 1488. 1489. 1490. 1491. 1492. 1493. 1494. 1495. 1496. 1497. 1498. 1499. 1500. 1501. 1502. 1503. 1504. 1505. 1506. 1507. 1508. 1509. 1510. 1511. 1512. 1513. 1514. 1515. 1516. 1517. 1518. 1519. 1520. 1521. 1522. 1523. 1524. 1525. 1526. 1527. 1528. 1529. 1530. 1531. 1532. 1533. 1534. 1535. 1536. 1537. 1538. 1539. 1540. 1541. 1542. 1543. 1544. 1545. 1546. 1547. 1548. 1549. 1550. 1551. 1552. 1553. 1554. 1555. 1556. 1557. 1558. 1559. 1560. 1561. 1562. 1563. 1564. 1565. 1566. 1567. 1568. 1569. 1570. 1571. 1572. 1573. 1574. 1575. 1576. 1577. 1578. 1579. 1580. 1581. 1582. 1583. 1584. 1585. 1586. 1587. 1588. 1589. 1590. 1591. 1592. 1593. 1594. 1595. 1596. 1597. 1598. 1599. 1600. 1601. 1602. 1603. 1604. 1605. 1606. 1607. 1608. 1609. 1610. 1611. 1612. 1613. 1614. 1615. 1616. 1617. 1618. 1619. 1620. 1621. 1622. 1623. 1624. 1625. 1626. 1627. 1628. 1629. 1630. 1631. 1632. 1633. 1634. 1635. 1636. 1637. 1638. 1639. 1640. 1641. 1642. 1643. 1644. 1645. 1646. 1647. 1648. 1649. 1650. 1651. 1652. 1653. 1654. 1655. 1656. 1657. 1658. 1659. 1660. 1661. 1662. 1663. 1664. 1665. 1666. 1667. 1668. 1669. 1670. 1671. 1672. 1673. 1674. 1675. 1676. 1677. 1678. 1679. 1680. 1681. 1682. 1683. 1684. 1685. 1686. 1687. 1688. 1689. 1690. 1691. 1692. 1693. 1694. 1695. 1696. 1697. 1698. 1699. 1700. 1701. 1702. 1703. 1704. 1705. 1706. 1707. 1708. 1709. 1710. 1711. 1712. 1713. 1714. 1715. 1716. 1717. 1718. 1719. 1720. 1721. 1722. 1723. 1724. 1725. 1726. 1727. 1728. 1729. 1730. 1731. 1732. 1733. 1734. 1735. 1736. 1737. 1738. 1739. 1740. 1741. 1742. 1743. 1744. 1745. 1746. 1747. 1748. 1749. 1750. 1751. 1752. 1753. 1754. 1755. 1756. 1757. 1758. 1759. 1760. 1761. 1762. 1763. 1764. 1765. 1766. 1767. 1768. 1769. 1770. 1771. 1772. 1773. 1774. 1775. 1776. 1777. 1778. 1779. 1780. 1781. 1782. 1783. 1784. 1785. 1786. 1787. 1788. 1789. 1790. 1791. 1792. 1793. 1794. 1795. 1796. 1797. 1798. 1799. 1800. 1801. 1802. 1803. 1804. 1805. 1806. 1807. 1808. 1809. 1810. 1811. 1812. 1813. 1814. 1815. 1816. 1817. 1818. 1819. 1820. 1821. 1822. 1823. 1824. 1825. 1826. 1827. 1828. 1829. 1830. 1831. 1832. 1833. 1834. 1835. 1836. 1837. 1838. 1839. 1840. 1841. 1842. 1843. 1844. 1845. 1846. 1847. 1848. 1849. 1850. 1851. 1852. 1853. 1854. 1855. 1856. 1857. 1858. 1859. 1860. 1861. 1862. 1863. 1864. 1865. 1866. 1867. 1868. 1869. 1870. 1871. 1872. 1873. 1874. 1875. 1876. 1877. 1878. 1879. 1880. 1881. 1882. 1883. 1884. 1885. 1886. 1887. 1888. 1889. 1890. 1891. 1892. 1893. 1894. 1895. 1896. 1897. 1898. 1899. 1900. 1901. 1902. 1903. 1904. 1905. 1906. 1907. 1908. 1909. 1910. 1911. 1912. 1913. 1914. 1915. 1916. 1917. 1918. 1919. 1920. 1921. 1922. 1923. 1924. 1925. 1926. 1927. 1928. 1929. 1930. 1931. 1932. 1933. 1934. 1935. 1936. 1937. 1938. 1939. 1940. 1941. 1942. 1943. 1944. 1945. 1946. 1947. 1948. 1949. 1950. 1951. 1952. 1953. 1954. 1955. 1956. 1957. 1958. 1959. 1960. 1961. 1962. 1963. 1964. 1965. 1966. 1967. 1968. 1969. 1970. 1971. 1972. 1973. 1974. 1975. 1976. 1977. 1978. 1979. 1980. 1981. 1982. 1983. 1984. 1985. 1986. 1987. 1988. 1989. 1990. 1991. 1992. 1993. 1994. 1995. 1996. 1997. 1998. 1999. 2000. 2001. 2002. 2003. 2004. 2005. 2006. 2007. 2008. 2009. 2010. 2011. 2012. 2013. 2014. 2015. 2016. 2017. 2018. 2019. 2020. 2021. 2022. 2023. 2024. 2025. 2026. 2027. 2028. 2029. 2030. 2031. 2032. 2033. 2034. 2035. 2036. 2037. 2038. 2039. 2040. 2041. 2042. 2043. 2044. 2045. 2046. 2047. 2048. 2049. 2050. 2051. 2052. 2053. 2054. 2055. 2056. 2057. 2058. 2059. 2060. 2061. 2062. 2063. 2064. 2065. 2066. 2067. 2068. 2069. 2070. 2071. 2072. 2073. 2074. 2075. 2076. 2077. 2078. 2079. 2080. 2081. 2082. 2083. 2084. 2085. 2086. 2087. 2088. 2089. 2090. 2091. 2092. 2093. 2094. 2095. 2096. 2097. 2098. 2099. 2100. 2101. 2102. 2103. 2104. 2105. 2106. 2107. 2108. 2109. 2110. 2111. 2112. 2113. 2114. 2115. 2116. 2117. 2118. 2119. 2120. 2121. 2122. 2123. 2124. 2125. 2126. 2127. 2128. 2129. 2130. 2131. 2132. 2133. 2134. 2135. 2136. 2137. 2138. 2139. 2140. 2141. 2142. 2143. 2144. 2145. 2146. 2147. 2148. 2149. 2150. 2151. 2152. 2153. 2154. 2155. 2156. 2157. 2158. 2159. 2160. 2161. 2162. 2163. 2164. 2165. 2166. 2167. 2168. 2169. 2170. 2171. 2172. 2173. 2174. 2175. 2176. 2177. 2178. 2179. 2180. 2181. 2182. 2183. 2184. 2185. 2186. 2187. 2188. 2189. 2190. 2191. 2192. 2193. 2194. 2195. 2196. 2197. 2198. 2199. 2200. 2201. 2202. 2203. 2204. 2205. 2206. 2207. 2208. 2209. 2210. 2211. 2212. 2213.

actions: as he is set over thee, *all his ways are Gods*, either for thy help or the tryal of thy graces. Wherefore he needs thy prayers, not thy revilings; thy peaceable deportment, and not a troublesome life.

I know that none of these things can save thee from being devoured by the mouth of the Sons of Belial. (1 King. 12, 15.) Only, what I say, is duty, is profitable, is commendable, is necessary: and that which will, when the Devil has done his worst, render thee lovely to thy Friends, terrible to thine enemies, serviceable in thy place as a Christian, and will crown the remembrance of thy name to them that survive thee with a blessing. *The memory of the just shall be blessed: but the name of the wicked shall rot.* (Prov. 10, 7.)

Tenthly, I will conclude then, with a word to those professors, if there be any such, that are of an unquiet, and troublesome spirit. Friends, I may say to you, as our Lord said once to his Disciples, *ye know not of what spirit ye are.* To with the destruction of

L S.

your

your enemies doth not become you. If ye be born to, and are called that you may inherit a blessing, pray be free of your *blessing, bless and curse not*. If you believe that the God whom you serve, is Supreme Governour, and is also wise enough to manage affairs in the World for his Church: pray keep fingers off, and refrain from doing evil. If the counsel of *Gemabel* was good when given to the enemies of Gods people, why not fit to be given to Christians themselves? Therefore refrain from these men, and let them alone: if the work that these men do, is that which God will promote and set up for ever, then you cannot disannul it, if not, God has appointed the time of its fall.

A Christian! and of a troublesome spirit, for shame forbear, shew out of a good conversation thy works with meekness of wisdom, and here let me present thee with three or four things.

First, consider, that though *Cain* was a very murderer; yet God forbade any mans meddling with him under a penalty of revenging his so doing upon his

his own head seven fold. And the Lord said unto him, therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him seven fold. (Gen. 4. 11.) But why not meddle with Cain, since he was a murderer? The reason is, because he persecuted his Brother for righteousness sake, and so espoused a quarrel against God: for he that persecutes another for righteousness sake, sets himself against God, fights against God, and seeks to overthrow him. Now such an one, the Christian must let alone and stand off from, that God may have his full blow at him in his time. Wherefore he saith to his Saints, and to all that are forward to revenge themselves; Give place, stand back, let me come leave such an one to be handled by me. Dearly beloved, avenge not your selves, but rather give place unto wrath, for it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord. (Rom. 12. 19.) Wherefore the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him, should slay him. You must not, indeed you must not avenge your selves of your enemies. Yea, though

though it was lawful once so to do, it is not lawful now. We have heard that it hath been said to them of old time, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy: but I say, said our Lord, love them, bless them, do good to them, and pray for them that hate you. (Mat. 5. 43.)

Secondly, Revenge is of the flesh; I mean this our revenge of our selves; and it proceeds from anger, wrath, impatience under the cross, unwillingness to suffer, from too much love to carnal ease, to estates, to enjoyments, to relations, and the like. It flows from a fearful cowardly spirit; there is nothing of greatness in it, except it be greatness of untowardness. I know there may, for all this, be pretences to justice, to righteousness, to the liberty of the Gospel, the suppressing of wickedness, and the promoting of holiness; but these can be but pretences; or at best, but the fruits of a preposterous zeal. For since, as has been often said in this Treatise, the Lord hath forbidden us to do so, it cannot be imagined that he should

yet animate any to such a thing by the holy Ghost, and the effects of the graces thereof. Let them then, if any such be, that are thus minded, be counted the narrow spirited, carnal, fleshly, angry, waspish spirited professors. The professors that know more of the Jewish, than of the Christian Religion, and that love rather to countenance the motions, passions, and gross motions of an angry mind, than with meekness to comply with the will of a heavenly Father. Thou art bid to be like unto him, and also thou art shewed wherein. (*Mat. 5. 45, 46, 47, 48.*) There is a man hates God, blasphemes his Name, despises his Being: Yea, says, There is no God. And yet the God that he carrieth it thus towards, doth give him his breakfast, dinner, and supper: clothes him well, and when night comes, has him to bed, gives him good rest, blesses his Field, his Corn, his Cattel, his Children: and raises him to high estate. Yea, and this our God doth, not only once or twice, but until these transgressors become old, his patience is thus

230. **Unquiet Sufferers.**

thus extended, years after years, that we might learn of him to do well.

Thirdly, a professor, and unquiet, and troublefome; discontented, and seeking to be revenged of thy persecutors: where is, or what kind of graces hast thou got. I dare say, they, even these in which thou ~~show~~ affectest, are none of the graces of the spirit. *The fruits of the spirit, are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no Law.* But wrath, strife, seditions, traitors, and inventors of evil things, are reckoned with the worst of sins, and sinners, and are plainly called the works of the flesh. (*Rom. 1, 29, 30, 31. 2 Tim. 3, 3, 4. Galat. 5, 19, 20, 21.*)

But I say, where is thy love to thine enemy? where is thy joy, under the Cross? where is thy peace? when thine anger has put thee upon being unquiet, where is thy long-suffering? for as thou affectest not ought, but thy waspishness can be seen? where also is thy sweet, meek and gentle spirit? and is goodness seen in thy seeking the life, or the damage of thy enemy?

Away,

Advice to Sufferers. 231

Away, away, thy graces if thou hast any, are by these thy passions, so jostled up into corners, and so pent for want of room and liberty to shew themselves, that by the word of God thou canst not be known to be of the right kind, what a noise soever thou makest.

A Christian, when he sees trouble coming upon him, should not fly in the face of the *instrument* that brings it, but in the face of the *cause* of its coming. Now the *cause* is thy self, thy base self, thy sinful self, and thy unworthy carriages towards God under all the mercy, patience and long-suffering that God has bestowed upon thee, and exercised towards thee. Here thou mayest quarrel, and be revenged and spare not, so thou take vengeance in a right way, and then thou wilt do so, when thou takest it by godly sorrow. (2 Cor. 7. 10. 11.)

A Christian then should bewail his own doings, his own unworthy doings, by which he has provoked God to bring a cloud upon him, and to cover him with it in anger. A Christian should

should say, *this is my wickedness*, when a persecutor touches him; yea, he should say it, and then shut up his mouth, and bear the indignation of the Lord, because he has sinned against him. *Thy way, and thy doings have procured these things unto thee; this is thy wickedness, because it is bitter, because it reacheth unto thy heart.* (Jer. 4. 18.)

Fourthly, What conviction of thy goodness can the actions that flow from such a spirit, give unto observers? none at all. Yea a spirit of unquietness under sufferings, and that seeketh to be revenged of those that do, for thy faith and the profession thereof, persecute thee, is so far off of giving conviction to beholders, that thou art *right*, that it plainly tells them that thou art *wrong*. Even Julian the Apostate, when he had cast away whatever he could of Christ, had this remaining with him, that a Christian ought to take with patience what affliction fell upon him for his masters sake: and would hit them in the teeth with an unbecoming behaviour, that complained, or that sought redress of them

them that had abused them for their faith and godly profession. What will men say, if you *shrink* and *whinch*, and take your sufferings unquietly: but that if you your selves were up-
permost, you would persecute also? much more have they ground to say so, when you will fight lying on your backs. Be quiet then, and if thine enemy *strike thee on one cheek, turn to him the other*: and if he also revile and curse thee, down upon thy knees and pray for him. This is the way to convince thy observers that thou art a godly man. *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do*, was one of those things that convinced the Centurion that Jesus was a righteous man. For he stood by the Cross to watch, and see how Jesus carried it in these his sufferings, as well as to see execution done. (*Mat. 27. 54. Luk. 23. 34. — 47.*)

Fifthly, A professor, unquiet, and turbulent under sufferings, and seeking his own revenge, cannot be a victor over what he should, nor a keeper of Gods commandments.

1. How can he be a victor over himself, *that is led up and down by the nose*, by his own passions? there is no man a *Christian victor*, but he that conquers himself, but he that beats down, and keeps under his body, his lusts, his passions in the first place. Is he that is led away with divers lusts, a victor? is he that is a servant to corruption, a victor? And if he that is captivated by his anger, wrath, passion, discontent, prejudice, &c. be not led away by them, I am under a mistake. So then to quarrel with Superiors, or with any that are troublesome to thee for thy faith, and thy profession: bespeaks thee overmastered, and a Captive, rather than a Master, and a Conquerer.

2. The same may be said upon the second head. *He keepeth not the Commandments of God.* For *those* teach him other things, as I have also shewed. The great Gospel-Commands terminate in *self-denial*; but if *self-revenge* is *self-denial*, I am besides the Book. Christ in the Book of the Revelations, sets him that keeps the commandments of

Advice to Sufferers. 235

of God, a great way off from him that taketh and smiteth with the Sword. *He that killeth with the Sword, must be killed with the Sword: Here is the patience, and faith of the Saints;* that is, in that they forbear to do thus and quietly suffer under those that thus, take it, and afflict the godly with it. Again, *Here is the patience of the Saints, here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesu.* (Revel. 13. 10. chap. 14. 12.) A patient continuing in well-doing: and if suffering for righteousness, be well-doing, then a patient continuing in that, as in other things, is the way to keep Gods commandments. (Rom. 2. 7.)

So that I say, he keepeth not Gods commandments, that is angry with his enemies, and that seeks to be revenged of him, that doth him ill. (You know the subject I am upon.) *The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.* (James 1. 20.) Wherefore professors beware, and take heed to your spirits, and see that you let not out your selves under your sufferings, in such extravagancies of spirit

236 Advice to Sufferers.

spirit against your enemies, as is no way seemly nor convenient.

Sixthly, Men that are unquiet, and discontented, and that seek revenge upon them that persecute them for their profession, do by so doing, also put themselves upon the brink of those ruins that others are further from. These men are like the flie that cannot let the candle alone, until she hath burned her self in the flame. Magistrates and men in Power have fortified themselves from being attarqued with turbulent and unruly Spirits, by many and wholesome Laws. And indeed should they not do so, one or other perhaps would be quickly tempted to seek to disturb them in the due exercise of their authority. Now the angry man, he is the flie that must be tripping, and running himself upon the point of these Laws. His angry spirit puts him upon quarrelling with his Superiors, and his quarrelling brings him, by words spoke in heat, within the reach of the net, and that with the help of a few more brings his neck to the halter. Nor is this, what ever
men

men think, but by the just judgment of God: *Whoever resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist, shall receive to themselves damnation.* (Rom. 13. 2. Esth. 2. 21, 22, 23.)

Wherefore let the *angry* man take heed, let the *discontented* man take heed. He that has a *profession*, and has not *grace* to know in this matter, to manage it, is like to bring his *profession* to shame. Wherefore, I say, let such take heed. And the *graces* aforementioned, and the *due* exercise of them are they, and that, which can keep us out of all such dangers.

Seventhly, And what comfort can such a man have, who has by his discontent and unruly carriages brought himself, in this manner, to his end. He has brought *himself* to shame, his *profession* to shame, his *friends* to shame; and his *name* to contempt and scorn. Bad men rejoyce at his fall, good men cannot own him, weak men stumble at him.

Besides, his *cause* will not bear him out, his heart will be clogged with *guilt*,
innocency

innocency and boldness will take wings and fly from him. Though he talketh of Religion upon the stage or ladder, *that* will blush to hear its name mentioned by them that suffer for evil-doing. Wherefore, my brethren, my Friends, my enemies, and all men, what Religion, Profession, or Opinion so ever you hold; Fear God, honour the King, and do that duty to both, which is required of you by the Word and Law of Christ: and then, to say no more, you shall not suffer by the Power for evil doing.

FINIS.

more, how not later by the
and then, so is
the Word
to be
the King, and do that duty to be
let you hold, fear God, honor
a right, to show, or opinion
to be, and to show, and to show, with
the Word